DISOBEDIENCE.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF PLAIN SENSE.

"Unlimited obedience is due only to the Univerſal Father of Heaven and Earth. My Parents may be mad or fooliſh; may be wicked and malicious; may be erroneouſly religious, or abſurdly ſcrupulous. I am not bound to mandates, either poſitive or negative, which either religion condemns, or reaſon rejects. When I ſuffer for my own crimes; when I may be ſued for my own debts, I may judge, by a parity of reaſon, of my own happineſs. The Parent's moral right can ariſe only from his kindneſs, and his civil right only from his money."

JOHNSON'S LETTERS TO MRS. THRALE.

VOL. I.

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DISOBEDIENCE.

CHAP. I.

IN a valley, ſheltered from the northern and weſterly winds, by ſome of the higheſt and moſt barren mountains of Merionethſhire, ſtands the village of Llamamon.—Hills of a leſs towering height, and leſs terrific aſpect, guard it from the blaſts of the eaſt, and being wholly open to the ſouth, the beams of a meridian ſun give a luxuriancy to its paſtures, ſeldom ſeen in the herbage of ſo mountainous a diſtrict; while

the ſtreams that fall from the ſurrounding heights, forming into a large brook, plentifully ſupply every part of the valley with the pureſt water, and clothe it with an almoſt perpetual verdure.

The village conſiſts of a place of worſhip, diſtinguiſhed by nothing but an awkward attempt at ſomething like a ſteeple, from an Engliſh barn, of a reſidence for the good paſtor of the flock, raiſed into conſideration above the ſurrounding habitations, by the ſaſhed windows with which it is adorned, and of about a dozen cottagers, that ſeemed not to lay claim to conſideration on any ſcore.

Of theſe, however, there was one, not many years ago, that, by the air of ſuperior order and neatneſs which it diſplayed, failed not to attract the eyes of the few travellers who paſſed through the valley of Llamamon. Not a ſtraw in the thatch, which formed its lowly roof, was ever ſeen amiſs; not a cob-

web

web ever deformed the ſmall diamond-ſhaped glaſs, of which the three little caſements it contained were compoſed. The ſtep at the door was always nicely ſanded, and the narrow paved path, which, through two rows of flowers and ſweet herbs, led to it from the green, was always ſcrupulouſly ſwept around the wooden porch, that preſerved, immaculate, the purity of the ſanded ſtep from the deſpoiling effects of the ſtorm, were twined the honeyſuckle and the roſe, and two low yew hedges, and a ſmall wicket, cloſed up the whole from the ravages of pigs and dogs.

All ſeemed to declare, that the inhabitants of this ſedulouſly attended ſpot held the firſt rank amongſt the cottagers of Llamamon.—Nor was conjecture miſled by theſe appearances. The owners of this rural manſion had known the plenty of a city, and the elegancies of a court life.——Richard had been, as he often told with pride, firſt groom, then footman, and laſtly butler, in

Families of the Firſt Diſtinction; and Eleanor had riſen, through the ſubaltern ſtations of houſe-maid and lady's woman, to the high poſts of houſe-keeper and confidant.

Notwithſtanding, however, the dangers to which their integrity, and the purity of their morals, had been expoſed, it would have been difficult to have found, in any ſtation, two more ſimply honeſt, or truly virtuous ſouls.

Fortune, in their firſt ſetting out in life, had thrown them together into the ſame family; and if Eleanor's dark rolling eye had firſt taught Richard the art of love, Richard's well-formed perſon, and open countenance, had firſt inſtructed Eleanor in the too often painful ſecret, that ſhe had an heart. But Richard was then only a rubber of horſes, and Eleanor only a rubber of ſtairs. They muſt therefore wait for better days and accumulated riches.

This

This period was arrived when Eleanor was obliged to quit the ſervice of Lady L——— not to marry Richard, but to attend upon the dying moments of an only parent.

"We have ſtaid all theſe long years for our own ſakes," ſaid ſhe; "we will ſtay a few months longer, for my poor mother's.

Richard did not oppoſe this reſolution; for he, too, had a kind mother, and felt, though he could not define all that was due to the character.

While Eleanor was employed in this ſacred and intereſting duty, Lady Caroline Haſtings, the youngeſt daughter of Lady L—— came to her houſe. Often had Eleanor comforted her under, and ſometimes preſerved her from the chaſtiſement of a ſevere governeſs; and Lady Caroline came now to pour into the compaſſionate boſom of her old friend more mature griefs, and more womanly diſtreſſes.

It is true, Lady Caroline was ſcarcely ſeventeen; but there is not any age too early for the diſcovery, that it is much more agreeable to liſten to the flatteries of love, than to the reproofs of authority. With the aſſiſtance of a handſome young officer, not many years older than herſelf, Lady Caroline had made this diſcovery, and ſhe now came to tell her kind Eleanor, that if ſhe would not counſel her, ſhe was undone; and if ſhe would not aſſiſt her, ſhe muſt kill herſelf. Eleanor ſaw more than ſufficient reaſon for counſel, but none for ſelf-murder. Lady Caroline, however, inſiſted that there was no alterenative but death or marriage.—"She could love only Mr. Seabright, and Mr. Seabright could only love her. But Mr. Seabright had not a penny in the world beſides his commiſſion, and Lord and Lady L——— would ſhut her up in a cellar, and feed her upon bread and water all her life, rather than allow her to marry Mr. Seabright; yet was ſhe reſolved to marry him, or to kill herſelf

herſelf, let Lord and Lady L——— do what they pleaſed."

She then bade Eleanor, if ſhe had not the heart to ſee her die, to tell her how ſhe could manage the matter of the wedding, and ſhe implored her to give her all the aſſiſtance in her power to accompliſh it.

Eleanor, in vain, deſired the young lady to wait a few years, and urged, that, as ſhe had a numerous train of brothers and ſiſters, ſhe muſt know the impoſſibility there would be for Lord L——— to give her a fortune that would ſupport herſelf and Mr. Seabright, even if Lord L——— was ever ſo well inclined to ſuch an act of indulgence: But that, when the Captain was really a Captain, there might be more to be ſaid for the matter; and if, after the trial of a few years, they really found that they could love nobody but each other, Eleanor, in her goodneſs, was ready to engage, that Lord

and Lady L——— would no longer oppoſe their happineſs.

This advice was more wiſe than acceptable. Lady Caroline flatly refuſed to take it. Eleanor as flatly refuſed to be aiding and abetting in any love meetings, or marriage elopements; and the young lady's compoſition being ſomething combuſtible, ſhe flew into a paſſion; called her dear good friend a hard hearted proſing old fool; reproached her for her ingratitude to a family which had always been ſo good to her; and ſo left her.

Although Eleanor had peremptorily refuſed contributing, in any way, to the ſatisfaction of the lovers, ſhe had no deſign of betraying them to the parents:—She too well knew the ſeverity of Lady L———'s temper, and the violence of Lady Caroline's, to hazard interfering between them; and in a very few days after the above interview with the latter, the public prints informed her, that all interference would be in vain.——

They

They announced the elopement of Lady Caroline to Scotland with Mr. Seabright, and the implacability of the lady's family.— This was carried to ſo great a height, and ſo pertinaciouſly perſiſted in, that in little more than eight months from the journey to Scotland, Lady Caroline found herſelf big with child, with about five guineas in her purſe, Mr. Seabright under ſailing orders for India, and without a friend who would look upon her, or a place where ſhe could hope for refuge.

In this diſtreſs, the never-failing goodneſs of Eleanor recurred to her memory, and, with perhaps leſs ſhame than ſhe ought to have, felt for her former treatment of this excellent friend, ſhe ſought under her roof for that ſhelter, and that aſſiſtance, which ſhe had in vain ſolicited from her parents.

Luckily for Lady Caroline, Eleanor was ſtill in London. Her mother being dead, ſhe had been married to Richard ſome

months, but had been detained in the metropolis, by the neceſſity of diſpoſing of all her late mother's property, which conſiſted in the neceſſary furniture of a kind of ſtationers ſhop. This buſineſs was nearly compleated, and ſhe and Richard were about to have repaired into the country, to have taken poſſeſſion of a large farm, which Richard had lately taken in the county of Montgomeryſhire.

Eleanor readily conſented to remain in London until Lady Caroline had lain in;—and in the mean time ſhe engaged to try all her intereſt with Lady L——, to induce her to provide for the child when it was born, or at leaſt to afford Lady Caroline ſome little ſupply of money, with which ſhe might be able to accompany her huſband to India, if his ſailing ſhould be deferred till after her recovery; or if that ſhould not be the caſe, to enable her to follow him thither.

But Eleanor rated the powers of her eloquence too high, when ſhe imagined ſhe could move the inflexible heart of Lady L———. Steeled more than ever as it was, by wounded pride, and offended authority, ſhe had *ſworn* never to forgive (ſhe ſaid) and if her daughter were to be a beggar, ſhe would not break her oath. Eleanor next aſſailed Lord L———, and happily either he had not ſworn, or he had leſs dread of perjury. With the child he would have nothing to do; "he had children enough of his own, and plagues enough with them, but he gave Eleanor bills for five hundred pounds, for the uſe of Lady Caroline, with his expreſs orders that he ſhould accompany, or follow her huſband to India; but he added, that he hoped ſhe ſhould then be able to forget the diſturbance ſhe had occaſioned him.

It happened, that the ſailing of the troops being delayed longer than had been expected, Lady Caroline had brought forth a daughter, and had recovered her health be-

fore the ſhips, that were to convey them, ſailed. It was therefore reſolved, that ſhe ſhould accompany her huſband; but neither did ſhe, nor Mr. Seabright, ſhew more inclination to be burthened with the poor new born infant than either Lord or Lady L—— had done. Lady Caroline declared it was impoſſible to be troubled with it on ſhipboard, and Mr. Seabright ſaid they had children enough in India.

"Do, my dear good Eleanor," ſaid Lady Caroline, "take the poor little baby with you into Wales.—You will be very kind to it; bring it up as your own; for you know I have no money to pay for its board, or any fineries, and you have great obligations to our family. If we grow rich in India, you ſhall be ſure to hear from us; if not, you muſt teach it to milk the goats, and look after the ſheep; it will ſoon come to be uſeful to you; and I ſhall be eaſy, becauſe I know you will be good to it."

Such

Such confidence did Lady Caroline pretend to have in goodneſs, to which certainly ſhe felt nothing correſpondent in her own boſom; nor can it be very uncharitable to ſuppoſe that ſhe felt little concern whether or no it was exerted towards her infant.

When Eleanor, however, agreed to the propoſal, ſhe thanked her very heartily;—talked of her eternal obligations, yet reminded her, that all ſhe did was only paying a part of the debt that ſhe owed to Lord L———'s family.—Again repeated, that if ſhe grew rich, ſhe would not forget her;—kiſſed her child, too, and wept; called it "poor little thing," and ſaid ſhe was ſorry to part with it, but that it was impoſſible to take it with her, and ſhe would therefore try not to afflict herſelf.

Mr. Seabright, though equally averſe from the trouble and expence of carrying the child to India, had more feeling, and more generoſity, than his wife.—He could not preſs

preſs the deſerted infant to his boſom without an extreme pain; nor could he conſent to burthen Eleanor with it, without offering her ſome compenſation.

He therefore forced upon her fifty pounds, and aſſured her, if he were fortunate, ſhe ſhould ſhare his good fortune.

Richard had been entirely paſſive during the whole of this tranſaction; for however he might be diſinclined to keeping any children, except his own, he regarded his wife's attachment to the family of Lady Caroline, and ſtill more, he regarded the helpleſs; (and if he refuſed his ſuccour) the deſerted ſtate of the poor infant. He had alſo a noble ſoul, and was no nice calculator of profit and loſs.—He therefore let matters take their courſe; and ſeeing that it was determined the child ſhould remain with them, he reſolved to keep the fifty pounds intire, againſt, as he ſaid, a "rainy day."

"At

"At preſent," ſaid he to Eleanor, "we ſhall feel the maintenance of this poor baby but little; but times may change.—We will put the fifty pounds to uſe, either as a ſmall portion for the poor little ſoul, if we ſhould hear no more of its fine papa and mama, or as a neſt egg for ourſelves in our old age."

Now, though old age is not uſually the firſt idea in the minds of lovers juſt arrived at the completion of their wiſhes, yet Richard might be juſtified in beholding this period in no very diſtant perſpective. So long had this faithful couple waited for the comforts of life, that they had nearly let the joys of it ſlip from them. Eleanor had already completed her five and fortieth birth-day, and Richard had numbered more than eight and forty years; but Eleanor was ſtill freſh and comely, and Richard ſtill ſtout, healthy, and vigorous.

CHAP. II.

NO ſooner had Mr. Seabright and Lady Caroline quitted England, than Richard and Eleanor, with little Mary in their care, began their journey into Wales.

The farm which Richard had taken lay in one of the counties adjoining to that wherein he was born.—He had furniſhed the farm houſe fully and ſubſtantially; he had ſtocked the farm plentifully, and they began their career of rural life with every appearance of opulence and ſucceſs.

Whether

Whether it were the errors of the underſtanding, or the virtues of the heart, that operated to the final diſappointment of ſuch flattering proſpects, it may be difficult to ſay; but certain it is, they were diſappointed.

The talents, neither of Richard nor Eleanor, had hitherto been exerted in the buſineſs of farming; but as there were not wanting, on the ſide of either, diligence, acuteneſs, or economy, time and experience might have ſecured the good ſucceſs uſually attendant on ſuch qualities. But Richard had numerous and indigent relations; no one of the family had before riſen to the height of grandeur he had attained. It was his ambition to be the making of them all; and the family, gratefully deſirous to co-operate with the intentions of their purpoſed benefactor, was not wanting in pointing out occaſions where this work of creation might advantageouſly begin.

In the courſe of three years, he had given a helping hand, as he called it, to ſo many of his connexions, that he wanted help himſelf.

He had ſet up one in a farm, and the farmer had broke; he had been bound for another in a large ſum of money, and the bond was forfeited; he had given a marriage portion to a third, and he maintained the children of a fourth. All was to come right in the courſe of a few years, there was no doubt; but in the mean while, Richard was obliged to ſell his ſtock, to keep himſelf out of jail, and to give up his farm, becauſe he could not pay his rent. He had ſtill ſome few paternal acres in the valley of Llamâmon;—he believed he could convert them into a profitable ſheep walk, and thither it was reſolved that he and Eleanor ſhould go to make the experiment.

"We are growing old wifes," ſaid Richard, "and it does not ſuit us to be ſtruggling in this world, when we ſhould be thinking of the

the quiet of the next.—Let us leave it to younger folks to buſtle, we have had our ſhare of labour; by what I ſee, we are not likely to have children; ſo what ſignifies ſtriving for riches we ſhould never enjoy?—We have yet enough, without much trouble, for a decent plenty; little Mary's fifty pounds are yet untouched for her; ſhe will be a ſolace to us, and we will be as good to her as we know how; there ſeems little likelihood that any body ſhould take her from us.—Perhaps it is in the valley of Llamamon that God deſigns we ſhould be happy, and there let us ſeek him."

Richard's philoſophy was very agreeable to Eleanor.—The cares and the labours of a large farm no ways ſuited her; and no drudging citizen ever ſighed more for the repoſe of his duſty villa on the city road, than Eleanor for the quiet of the valley of Llamamon.

But

But Eleanor's imagination, like the imagination of all other people, had over-rated the bleſſings ſhe was to enjoy; and the deſolated appearance of the miſerable cottage, when ſhe firſt ſaw it, with the weeds and rubbiſh, which covered the little garden ſpot with which it was ſurrounded, gave her no inviting prognoſtic of the pleaſures of retirement.

But Eleanor was not one of thoſe, who, when diſappointed, ſit down in deſpair. By the joint efforts of Richard and herſelf, the houſe and garden ſoon aſſumed a quite different appearance, and it was not long before the air of neatneſs, even to elegance, that was diffuſed around, made them the objects of admiration to all who ſaw them. Richard's ſheep walk anſwered beyond his expectations; there was no want of plenty in the ſimple fare, to which they now accuſtomed themſelves; nor (which has perhaps ſtill more ſatisfactory) were they deſtitute of thoſe diſtinctions which often contribute the largeſt ſhare in the gratifications of the human mind.

Richard

Richard was looked upon as a travelled man, returned amongſt his countrymen, to benefit them by his accumulated wiſdom;—and Eleanor ſoon found herſelf, next to the vicar's wife, the female of moſt conſequence in the valley of Llamamon. All queſtions were referred to a perſon who knew ſo much of life as Mrs. Morgan. She was the general phyſician and ſurgeon, the adviſer of the young, and the comforter of the old; and, as ſhe was comparatively rich, the reliever of the wants of all. Neither did Mrs. Ellis diſdain to conſider Mrs. Morgan as her equal; and Eleanor had not been ſettled in her cottage more than a year, before ſhe told Richard there was no doubt but that God *did* deſign they ſhould find happineſs in the valley of Llamamon.

The ſociety of the vicar and his wife was indeed, almoſt of itſelf, ſufficient to confer happineſs upon thoſe who had taſte to reliſh it.

Mr.

Mr. Ellis had paſſed his youth amidſt the great and the polite.—A diſtant relation of a noble family, he had been firſt tutor to the heir of it, and and then his companion, in a three years reſidence on the Continent. The advantages to be derived from ſuch a circumſtance, however, they had been overlooked or neglected by the pupil, had been fully underſtood, and aſſiduouſly cultivated by the tutor. He had returned to England, his mind enriched by a variety of uſeful and ornamental knowledge; improved in his manners, and unimpaired in his morals.—But he was ſtill poor, and dependent; and after ſome years of expectation, and more of diſappointment, he was rewarded for his ſervices, his integrity, and his learning, by the gift of three church benefices, in the county of Merionethſhire. On an accurate calculation of the accumulated value of the whole, he found he was debtor to his noble patron's generoſity juſt ſeventy-five pounds, eighteen ſhillings and ſixpence halfpenny per annum.

With

With this ample remuneration for all his ſervices, Mr. Ellis declared himſelf ſatisfied, and, with a paternal fortune, that ſomething more than doubled his church income, at the age of fifty he became the vicar of Llamamon.

Amongſt ſome other acts of indiſcretion, wherein Mr. Ellis had not been ſufficiently attentive to the calculation of pounds, ſhillings, and pence, might be laid to his charge a marriage, which he had contracted before he was thirty, with a young woman, who was as dependant, and as poor as himſelf;—it mattered little that ſhe poſſeſſed all his virtues, and moſt of his accompliſhments.

The match was highly offenſive to the patrons of both parties; and while it was often the alledged cauſe why ſo little had been done for either, was in fact the real one of ſufferings to the unfortunate pair, that might have atoned, in the opinion of the moſt ſtrenuous advocates, for competent puniſhment,

for

for a much greater fault than the one they had been guilty of.

Having ſtruggled with poverty, ſickneſs, and misfortune, for more than twenty years, Mrs. Ellis was as well pleaſed as her huſband, to eſcape from a world which ſhe thought had uſed her ill, and to take ſhelter in the valley of Llamamon. She had had ſeveral children, but had loſt them all. This circumſtance, which had been amongſt her heavieſt misfortunes at the time when it happened, ſhe had now accuſtomed herſelf to think of with compoſure; and having nothing now to hope or fear on this ſide the grave, ſhe recovered that peace of mind amidſt the black barrenneſs of the Welch mountains, which ſhe had imagined ſhe had irrevocably loſt in the more cultivated ſcenes of the ſouthern part of the iſland. Both ſhe and Mr. Ellis were aſtoniſhed to find how little would make them rich at Llamamon, and they acknowledged that Lord Delville had

had at length kept his ſo often repeated promiſe, of making them eaſy for life.

They had now enjoyed this eaſe more than ten years.—During the laſt five, Mr. Ellis, finding their income more than amply ſufficient for their wants, had reſigned one of his benefices, of the yearly value of twenty pounds, in favour of a young man, who was before ſtarving with a wife and four children, on ten pounds a year.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellis had furniſhed, and fitted up the vicarage to their own taſte.—the moſt valuable part of its furniture, in the opinion of them both, was a tolerably good library; partly collected, indiſcreetly enough, by Mr. Ellis himſelf, and partly the gift of his former pupil, who once, in a fit of generoſity, or rather in a frolic, "to ſurpriſe the old buck," had ſent him down books to the value of an hundred and fifty pounds.

Beyond the walls of this little vicarial dwelling, except at the calls of piety and benevolence, Mr. and Mrs. Ellis ſeldom found inclination or inducement to ſtir. Of wealthy neighbours they had few, and of theſe they knew little; but the poor were numerous, and with theſe they were intimately acquainted.

They ſought the poor, and the poor ſought them; for it was never known that the vicar of Llamamon ſent away the ignorant uninſtructed, the wretched unconſoled, or the hungry and naked unclothed or unfed.

CHAP. III.

THE arrival of a new inhabitant made an epoch of no little importance in the annals of Llamamon.

Richard and Eleanor were ſcarcely arrived at their cottage, before Mr. Ellis went to ſhake hands with this his new pariſhioner; and Mrs. Ellis waited on Mrs. Morgan, to hope ſhe would do her the favour of drinking a cup of tea with her the following Sunday, the only day in the week on which ſhe indulged herſelf in ſuch a luxury.

These were civilities they would have shewn to any new comers; but the good qualities, and the good sense of Richard and Eleanor, soon gave them a peculiar claim to the favour and notice of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis. There was, however, another circumstance that made this worthy couple still more interesting to Mrs. Ellis than any merit of their own possibly would ever have done.—This was the little Mary. She was just arrived at the age of that child which Mrs. Ellis had last lost, and best loved. She fancied too, that she saw a resemblance between the features and manners of the infants, and she became immediately and passionately fond of Mary.

Eleanor had judged it prudent to keep the secret of the child's birth from the relations of Richard, who, though they could not be jealous of a child of his own, would most undoubtedly have been so of one who had no claim in *blood* to his protection. She had one, however, from *nature*, and it was such

an

an one, as the nature of Richard was not inclined to diſavow.

But however cloſely Eleanor kept this ſecret, it was near for a moment out of her mind, and the thoughts of what Mary might one day be, made her eager to ſeize every means poſſible of contributing ſomething to the improvement of her mind, and the formation of her manners. Eleanor had lived too long amongſt the well bred, and well inſtructed, not to ſee inſtantly how well qualified Mrs. Ellis was to forward her wiſhes.—She therefore met her more than half way in the deſire ſhe manifeſted to have the little Mary almoſt conſtantly with her. And ſo well did the child profit by the example and inſtructions of her preceptreſs, that, at ten years old, ſhe was known amongſt her companions by the appellation of the "Little Gentlewoman."

The little gentlewoman had indeed ſeveral gentlewomanlike qualities.—Her temper

was kind, and her heart warm and generous; but ſhe was not without ſome oppoſite qualities, which, however they may be found amongſt gentlewomen, are near thoſe which lead to their diſgrace. She was not without her ſhare of pride, and ſhe had ſomewhat more than her ſhare of ſaucineſs.

Eleanor, who thought ſhe ſaw Lady Caroline reviving in her daughter, did all in her power to counteract ſuch evil propenſities; but Mrs. Ellis could ſee no faults in her favourite; and it was perhaps happy for the future life of Mary, that ſhe had ſcarcely reached her eleventh year when Mrs. Ellis died.

The extreme grief with which the child was ſeized upon this event, and which ſpoke a ſenſibility and reflection far beyond her years, endeared her to Mr. Ellis.—He found all his philoſophy, and all his religion, little enough to ſupport him under a blow ſo fatal to his domeſtic peace; and he ſought, by attaching himſelf to one who appeared ſo truly

to

to participate in his ſorrows, the only alleviation that ſeemed to be afforded him on this ſide the grave.

From the moment of Mrs. Ellis's death, he appeared to have no pleaſure, when ſeparated from Mary.—But, as during her life, he had often reproved her for the indiſcreet partiality with which ſhe nouriſhed the evil tendencies of her little darling, he reſolved to guard himſelf, with all the reſolution in his power, againſt falling into the ſame error. This was no eaſy taſk; the failings of Mary were often extremely amuſing, and the acuteneſs of her underſtanding, and the readineſs of her repartee, often extorted a ſmile, even in the midſt of the anger they provoked. But Mr. Ellis was at once engagingly gentle, and inflexibly ſteady; and as the more he knew of the temper and heart of Mary, the more he was convinced that both were worthy of cultivation, he determined to ſpare no pains in the proſecution of the taſk he had undertaken. Much leſs ſolicitous with re-

ſpect to the improvement of her underſtanding, he ſeemed, at firſt, to diſregard all inſtruction that did not point at the correction of her temper, and he even interdicted every acquirement that could ſerve to give her a higher opinion of herſelf. Young as ſhe was, ſhe had a juſt taſte for all that was excellent; ſhe doted upon Mr. Ellis, and ſhe became ambitious to deſerve his love. He ſoon ſucceeded in making her aſhamed of every kind of inſolence, and found the means of engaging even her pride in the cauſe of virtue.

But all theſe well-directed cares of her excellent friend might have proved inſufficient thoroughly to have corrected the imperfections of Mary's temper, had he not ſoon had an aſſiſtant in the work, who probably ſaved him half the labour.

This was a youth of about fourteen, the ſon of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood.

William

William Challoner was the eldeſt of a family conſiſting of five ſons and a daughter. He was deſtined to ſucceed his father in the poſſeſſion of a paternal eſtate of about an hundred pounds a year, and the management of a large and profitable farm, which the family had rented for ſeveral generations back, from the great man of the country.

Nature had endowed William with requiſites far beyond thoſe which are generally eſteemed neceſſary for the ſtation for which he was deſigned. To health, ſtrength, and activity, ſhe had added not only a vigorous and clear underſtanding, with an ardent love of employment, but ſhe had given him an integrity not to be ſhaken, a diſpoſition at once gentle and reſolute, with a quick perception of all that was beautiful or excellent in the works of God or of man.

Humphry Challoner had viewed, with delight, the vigour and agility of his ſon's frame, and had prognoſticated, from the

acuteneſs of his ſenſe, that he would ſoon be the beſt maker of a bargain in the whole country; but as to his other good qualities, he either did not perceive them, or conſidered them as having a tendency to his diſadvantage.—Within the laſt four years alſo, William had acquired a taſte, which, in his father's opinion, ſtill more certainly threatened a check to the family ſpirit of money-getting, which had, through ſeveral generations, diſtinguiſhed it from father to ſon.

When he was about ten years old, William had been yielded to the earneſt requeſt of one of his uncles, who was a curate at Briſtol, and who, having loſt his wife and only child, almoſt at the ſame moment, by a malignant fever, felt a painful void in his houſe and his heart, which he thought nothing would ſo well ſupply, as the playful manners, and engaging qualities of his favourite nephew.

With this uncle, who was a man of gentle demeanour, good ſenſe, and ſome learning, William

William had acquired ſo decided a predilection for the pleaſures of reading, that, from this time, though he loſt none of his love for rural and active employment, yet the hours of leiſure and amuſement were always dedicated to a book.

His father had been induced to ſuffer him to continue thus long with his uncle, from the conſideration that he would, with him, receive the advantages of a ſchool, without any expence being incurred; nor had it entered the head of Mr. Challoner, that four years inſtruction from his brother could be more detrimental to the neceſſary ignorance of William, than if he had ſpent the ſame time in the village ſchool where his brothers received their education. At the age of fourteen, it being then ſuppoſed that he could read, write, and caſt an account, he had been recalled for the purpoſe of immediately beginning the apprenticeſhip drudgery of his future life.

William returned to Llanbeder farm with joy, for he remembered the happy days he had ſpent there, and he was eager to diſplay the acquirements he had made during his abſence. His uncle had given him a ſmall collection of books, and had charged him not to forget his learning. Learning, the miſtaken curate told him, would be the heightener of his pleaſures, and the ſolace of his pains. It would, moreover, keep him from vicious purſuits, and could do him no harm, whatever were his fortune in life.

Full of theſe ideas, William returned home; but he ſoon found, to his infinite ſurpriſe and regret, that ſuch notions were not current at Llanbeder farm.

With his hand-writing, and readineſs at arithmetic, his father declared himſelf ſatiſfied; but when he proceeded to diſplay accompliſhments much more dear to his pride than either, his father paſſionately ſnatched the book out of his hand, and when he beheld

held the ſtore with which his uncle had provided him, Humphry made no ſcruple of throwing the whole on the back of the fire.

William regarded this wreck of his wealth and happineſs with mingled grief, contempt, and reſentment; and this act of paſſionate injuſtice in the father laid the foundation in the breaſt of the ſon, for that reſolute determination of judging and acting for himſelf, which afterwards marked his character.—This was, however, no time to diſplay the effects of it.

Humphry Challoner ruled his family with a rod of iron; and from the wife of his boſom to the meaneſt plough-boy, of which it was compoſed, reſiſtance to his will was unheard and unthought of.

Humphry was a man of ſufficient ſenſe, and knew, as it is called, the world; that is, the art of making money in it; and having turned his thoughts, with very conſiderable

ſucceſs, to this point, held all knowledge beyond what he himſelf poſſeſſed, not only as ſuperfluous, but detrimental to the great object of exiſtence. To what he called book learning, he had an additional averſion, from the conſequences that he thought it had brought upon his brother the curate.

Henry had been the only Challoner in the memory of man who had preferred a book to the plough, and he was the only one who had not improved the portion allotted him by his father. On the contrary, having ſpent moſt of it in purſuit of knowledge, he had ſat down contented with the profits of a Briſtol curacy, and it was no longer apocryphal that his family would not be enriched one penny by him.

Humphry was accuſtomed, in addition to the fatal inſtance of his brother, which he held up as a ſcare-crow to his children, to adduce Mr. Ellis as another proof of the fatal effects of "book learning."

"There's

"There's a fine man, or wiſe man, a learned man for you (would he ſay with mingled contempt for poor Mr. Ellis, and ſelf-gratulation) to be ſure, who ſo fine, ſo wiſe, ſo learned as he; and yet he never knew how to make a penny of all his wiſdom, his learning, and his finery. With all his wiſdom, he ſerved Lords and Dukes for nothing; and having ſtarved half his life in fine company, came to ſtarve the remainder in the vicarage of Llamamon.—Let him ſhew me ſuch a well furniſhed houſe as this, a farm ſo well ſtocked.—Let him count guineas with me; and yet, what do I know of books? But ſuch things ar'n't got by poreing over a book."

Such harangues, after the return of William from Briſtol, were delivered much more frequently than ever, and with new ſpirit and vehemence; nor did they often conclude, without a threat to William, that if ever he were ſeen with a book in his hand, he ſhould have his head broken. Theſe fatherly

therly admonitions ſeemed but the more indiſpenſable to Humphry, as he obſerved that William as decidedly differed from his opinions, in reſpect to Mr. Ellis, as he did with regard to books.

It happened that Henry Challoner had received ſome obligations from Mr. Ellis, and he had charged William, on his return to Llanbeder, to make his acknowledgments to him, and to preſent him a ſmall preſent of ſome foreign dainties, which the ſituation of Briſtol had made it eaſy to procure.

Llanbeder farm was ſituated at the head of the valley of Llamamon, and was not diſtant more than a mile from the vicarage.

It was upon the morning following the deſtruction of all William's worldly wealth, that he ſallied forth to execute the commiſſion given him by his uncle; his mind was wholly occupied with his loſs, and the reſentment it had given occaſion for, he thought little of the

the buſineſs he was going about. On being ſhewn, therefore, to Mr. Ellis, who was ſitting in his little library, of which there was not one corner unoccupied by ſome volume or other, every faculty of his mind was engaged in the contemplation of ſuch a mine, as it appeared to him, of inexhauſtible treaſure; and he ſtood ſilent, gazing on the loaded ſhelves, wholly forgetful of what had brought him thither, and neglectful even of the common civility due to Mr. Ellis.

"What is your buſineſs, my good boy?" ſaid Mr. Ellis; "and what engages your attention ſo?"

"Oh! Sir," burſt forth William, "how happy you are, to have ſo many books; and you may read them too!"

"You ſhall read them alſo," returned Mr. Ellis, mildly, "if you chuſe it; but you did not come here to talk to me of my books, did you?"

"Oh! no," replied William, with vivacity; "but ſeeing ſo many, I could think of nothing

nothing elſe; and ſhall I read them all?—And will you let me ſometimes read to you, Sir, as my uncle uſed to do?"

"Certainly," ſaid Mr. Ellis; "but who is your uncle? And where did you learn to be ſo fond of reading?"

William, now recollecting where he was, ſoon made himſelf known; delivered his preſent with the beſt grace he could, and uſed all the arts in his power to conciliate Mr. Ellis's affections. This was no difficult matter.—The open and ingenuous countenance of William, the readineſs with which he explained himſelf, and above all, his taſte for reading, which had been Mr. Ellis's paſſion through life, ſoon procured him not only the good opinion, but the real love of this worthy man.

"It is a pity you did not continue with your uncle," ſaid he; "you would have improved much under his care."

"My

"My father does not think ſo," ſaid William; "he ſays I am old enough now to aſſiſt in the farm, and that is to be my buſineſs; he does not love reading, and there are no books at Llanbeder."

"Your father is ſo far right," returned Mr. Ellis, "that reading ought not to interfere with your buſineſs; but I do not ſee why it may not as well be your pleaſure, as foot ball, priſon bars, or hoop driving."

"I can do all thoſe," ſaid William; "but a great deal may be done in the twenty-four hours; and if I had books, I could read, play, and mind my buſineſs too."

"Well," returned Mr. Ellis, "if I hear a good character of you; if you are neither idle nor wicked, you ſhall not want books. As a proof of what I ſay, I will lend you a book now; but remember, if I hear ill of you, I ſhall take it away, and it will be long before you have another."

"Oh! Sir," cried William, "you may truſt me; I ſhall work like a horſe now:—But will you, Sir, let me come ſometimes of

a

a Sunday, and hear you talk? My uncle uſed to ſay, that reading did little good, except we might talk of what we read to ſome body wiſer than ourſelves."

Mr. Ellis aſſured him, nothing could give him more pleaſure; and added, "you know, William, you are my pariſhioner, and it is therefore my duty to inſtruct you."

William took his leave, overwhelmed with gratitude and delight, and loaded with a volume of Engliſh hiſtory, which, however, he took care to conceal from the prying eyes of his father.

From this day William felt, and profeſſed the moſt profound veneration for Mr. Ellis. He thought him the wiſeſt, as well as the beſt of men; and as there was not one diſſentient voice in the whole neighbourhood as to the latter particular, William little regarded the continual declamations and ſarcaſms levelled by his father againſt the folly of the poor vicar. Such, indeed, was the reputation

reputation of Mr. Ellis amongſt his pariſhioners, that Humphry himſelf durſt not forbid all intercourſe between him and his ſon. To be the parſon's favourite, was the beſt praiſe that could be beſtowed upon any one, and it was alone thoſe who deſerved none, who were heedleſs whether or not they were diſtinguiſhed by him.

But the pre-eminent honours that Mr. Ellis beſtowed upon poor William, were not honours without danger; they were at once the cauſe and the compenſation of many a ſevere reproof, and many a hard blow, all which William bore patiently and humbly; but they did not leſſen his reverence for Mr. Ellis, or increaſe his affection for his father. Nothing, indeed, could equal the unkindneſs of Humphry towards his ſon, except his blindneſs to the effects of that very intercourſe he was ſo ſolicitous to prevent.

So fearful was William that Mr. Ellis ſhould *hear ill of him*, that his induſtry and application

application to the buſineſs of the farm became unremitted, and in conſequence he was ſoon known as the moſt diligent and intelligent youth in the country.

CHAP. IV.

BY the vigilance with which William purſued his farming occupations, when engaged in them, he contrived ſo well to huſband his time, that it was not only on Sundays that he found leiſure to attend to the lectures of Mr. Ellis; nor was it long before he found himſelf drawn to the vicarage by an attraction ſtill more powerful than even the wiſdom and

and goodneſs of the maſter of it.—This attraction was Mary.—As ſhe was now ſeldom from the ſide of Mr. Ellis during the day, William neceſſarily became intimately known to her.—To know her, even from her earlieſt years, was to love her—her gaiety, her archneſs, her kind heartedneſs, were irreſiſtible; add to this, that ſhe was almoſt as paſſionately attached to her books as William himſelf. The conſequence is eaſily foreſeen.—A ſhort time was ſufficient to produce the fondeſt friendſhip between them.

Mr. Ellis ſaw quickly how uſeful an aſſiſtant he might make William, in his attempts to correct the temper of Mary, and he was delighted to make uſe of means that were likely to be as grateful to his pupil as the end was deſirable to himſelf.

Although William had already began to think for himſelf, and reſolutely to purſue what his reaſoning forcibly told him was allowable, or right, yet had he the temper of an

an angel. Every ſpecies of pride or impertinence were foreign to his nature; he was incapable of them himſelf, and beheld them with abhorrence in another. All his growing love for Mary did not conceal from his obſervation the tendency her mind had to theſe qualities, nor prevent his ſhewing the moſt marked diſapprobation, whenever ſhe betrayed the effects of them. Mary's heart ſunk under the frown of William; nor, till ſhe had made her peace with him, could ſhe be at peace with herſelf.

The dread of loſing his friendſhip, cauſed her to keep a ſtrict guard over her temper when he was preſent; and if ſhe offended in his abſence, Mr. Ellis took care that he ſhould be apprized of the miſdemeanour when they met, and then would William neither walk, read, nor converſe with her.—She obſerved, too, that her moſt lively ſallies, when ſtained with impertinence, never extorted a ſmile from him, and ſhe began to think

think meanly of a talent that was not amuſing to one whom ſhe moſt wiſhed to pleaſe.

If, however, ſhe had manifeſted a continued gentleneſs, and propriety of ſpeech and manners, for any length of time, Mr. Ellis aſſembled a knot of his young pariſhioners on the green before his door, and while Richard played on the violin, Mary was given to William as a partner.

By theſe, and ſimilar methods, Mary was ultimately taught ſo perfect a command over herſelf, that, at fifteen, though ſhe preſerved all the vivacity and gaiety of her character, ſhe retained ſcarcely a trace of thoſe qualities, which, in her early years, had ſeemed to augur ſo ill of her future diſpoſition.

Happy, indeed, was it for her, that, at ſo early an age, ſhe had attained the habit of *ſelf*-correction, ſince ſhe now began to diſplay charms that probably would have rend-

ered all her male admoniſhers, and William himſelf, blind to every fault of her heart, or her mind; and, by the overwhelming flood of adulation, which they let in upon her, would have borne down all the barriers that inſtruction, admonition, and reproof from others, could have oppoſed in her favour.

Wherever ſhe went, ſhe was diſtinguiſhed by the elegance of her form, the brilliancy of her complexion, and the modeſty and intelligence of her countenance. She was known in the villages around as the "beauty of Llamamon;" and already had Humphry Challoner another cauſe to curſe the diſſimilarity which prevailed between his taſte and that of his ſon.

Let not the higher ranks of ſociety arrogate to themſelves the merit of entertaining the exalted idea, which inſtructs them how to convert the ſilken bands of love into the golden chains of avarice or ambition.—If modern

modern ſovereigns, improving upon the horror of ancient examples, *look on with delight*, while they ſacrifice the Iphigenia's; if the *heads of two illuſtrious houſes* cement the union of their accumulated greatneſs with the tears of their offspring, even in ſteps of ſuch lofty wickedneſs, theſe lords of the earth can be followed by the farmer and the artiſan.

The ſhopkeeper tells his plebeian ſon, that, if he will marry his neighbour Simpſon's rich daughter, he will give him "a pretty penny" to begin the world with; but if he keep company any longer with pretty Sally, he will ſhut his door upon him.

The farmer, *being well to do in the world*, bids his eldeſt ſon not demean himſelf with girls that have nothing, and promiſes, if he finds a wife who can bring him a fortune ſuitable to his own, that he will make a man of him.

The traffic of the human ſpecies is not confined to the ſhores of Africa. It is not alone the Weſt Indian planter, who makes the groans and captivity of his fellow-creatures the road to wealth. He, it is true, manacles the limbs, and lacerates the body; but the avaricious or the ambitious parent, who, in the marriage choice, makes his will the law to his child, reſtrains the dearer freedom of the mind, and tortures or vitiates the heart.

Hitherto it had been an unviolated maxim in the prudential code of the Challoner family, to chuſe the matrimonial partner by the weight of the purſe.

Humphry had ſo choſen his own wife; but he had not preſumed to ſeek in her any diſtinction beyond that which fortune beſtowed. In chuſing for his ſon, his ambition took a bolder flight.—He had himſelf ſome pretenſions to family, and could tell how his anceſtors had branched out from the

the ancient ſtock of the Challoners of the north, and how, that if they had hitherto contented themſelves with wives from amongſt the yeomanry, it was more a proof of their prudence, than any evidence that they had not a right to look higher.

This was indeed a prudence that Humphry, upon the whole, much approved, he being as warm an advocate for the immaculate preſervation of ranks and orders in ſociety, as any prince, prieſt, or nobleman exiſting; and he poſſeſſed a kind of ſurly pride, which made him regard his ſuperiors rather with contempt than envy. But accident had thrown a temptation in his way, that neither his prejudices nor his reaſon could reſiſt.

A neighbouring 'ſquire had an only daughter. This 'ſquire could trace his lineage back to the ancient Princes of Wales; but ſuch had been the hereditary ſtupidity of the race, that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Fluellin family was

little more advanced in civilization and knowledge, than when they firſt branched forth from the royal root.—Of the portion of fat beeves and honey, that the original Princeſs might have received from her royal progenitors, or of the domains that might have been granted to the Prince, who firſt founded ſo illuſtrious a generation, no traces remained. Of more modern acquiſitions, however, an eſtate, bringing an income of ſomething more than three hundred pounds per annum, ſtill reſted in the poſſeſſion of the preſent repreſentative of the blood of the ancient ſovereigns of Wales; and of this property, Miſs Deborah Fluellin was the declared and undiſputed heireſs.

The mother of this young Princeſs had been firſt the ſervant, then the miſtreſs, and laſtly the wife of the 'ſquire.—He had married her juſt in time to legitimate their offſpring; and in marrying, he had introduced into the family of the Fluellins more underſtanding than it could before have been able to

to boaſt ſince the times of Howel Dha.—A ſew words will deſcribe her.—She was a ſharp, notable ſtirring woman, who had too much good ſenſe to deſpiſe the manners and habits to which ſhe had been accuſtomed from her birth, and too much true ſpirit to ape thoſe of her ſuperiors. She continued, therefore, after her marriage, what ſhe had been before, the beſt dairy-woman in the county; nor could the folly of the times, or the examples of thoſe around her, ever induce her to ſuffer her daughter to become a finer lady than herſelf. She had therefore turned a deaf ear to all the admonitions of the Mrs. Ap-Evenſes and Mrs. Ap-Thomaſes of the neighbourhood, as to the neceſſity of Miſs Fluellin being ſent to a boarding-ſchool, and, by that means, of a pretty ſharp diſcipline at home, ſhe had, in ſpite of the ſturdy will, and the more aſpiring proſpects of the young lady, compelled her to become as deep in the myſtery of the cheeſe-tub as herſelf.

Here, then, was a prize that Humphry Challoner was reſolved to make his own.—Here was birth to flatter that ſecret pride which he felt, and did not avow; fortune to ſatisfy the avarice which he felt, and did avow, and good houſewifery to juſtify his choice in the eyes of all the old-faſhioned farmers and farmereſſes in the country.—The girl, too, was ſtout, clean, and healthy; and if ſhe had no remarkable beauty, neither had ſhe any defect in her appearance.—No young man could reaſonably object to her, and Humphry was reſolved that William ſhould not.

Mrs. Fluellin much admired the worldly ſenſe and prudent maxims of Humphry;—and it being her full deſign that her daughter ſhould never riſe above herſelf in ſociety, a marriage with the ſon of ſo opulent, and ſo wiſe a farmer, entirely met her wiſhes as to the future eſtabliſhment of Miſs Fluellin.

Mr.

Mr. Fluellin could not indeed forget that he was deſcended from Princes, and talked a little concerning the blood of the ancient Britons.—But Mrs. Fluellin, as was meet, ruled him with an abſolute ſway; and ſhe, having once declared her will, he knew he had no part to take but that of ſubmiſſion, being fully ſenſible, that, from that will, lay no appeal.

It had been at the requeſt of Mrs. Fluellin that William had been recalled from his uncle's, as ſhe had been equally afraid of his acquiring too much learning by means of ſo able an inſtructor, and too much beauiſm in the opulent city of Briſtol.

With as little regard to the rights of their children, and with as ſharp an eye to their reſpective intereſts, as if the contracting parties had been Princes, it had been agreed between Mrs. Fluellin and Humphry, that William Challoner ſhould eſpouſe Deborah Fluellin, immediately on his attaining the

age of twenty-one; that, in the mean time, he ſhould be brought up in the nurture and knowledge of farming, and that other lovers, interdicted on both ſides, the young people ſhould be conſtantly together, that they might like each other—if they could.

Hence it may be eaſily imagined, that if Humphry had ſeen, with diſguſt and diſpleaſure, William's partiality for the vicarage, when he had no reaſon to ſuppoſe but that his love of books, and his affection for Mr. Ellis, were alone the attractions that drew him thither, what muſt be his diſapprobation and anger, when firſt he began to ſuſpect that the beauties of Mary formed an allurement more powerful than either? Her opening charms were become the ſubject of general diſcourſe; Humphry had himſelf ſeen her, and could not deny but that beauty, ſuch as her's, formed a very formidable bar to the accompliſhment of his engagement with Mrs. Fluellin.

But

But Humphry was not a man to ſubmit his will to the arbitration of a pair of ſparkling eyes; and he doubted not but that he poſſeſſed the means of reducing William to obedience. Hitherto, although the deſigns of his father were well known to him, he had manifeſted, to the fair Deborah, nothing but the moſt mortifying indifference. On all occaſions of holyday feſtivity, when buſineſs, giving way to leiſure, allowed William to ſeek his amuſement—he had ever preferred a viſit to the vicarage, to all the fine things at Llanbeder farm, or the more oſtentatious diſplay of rural dainties, decked by the fair hand of Deborah, in the hall of Fluellin.—His ſteps, it is true, of late, not unfrequently deviated to the cottage of Eleanor, where Mary, occupied in employments ſuited to her ſex and ſtation, was now much oftener to be found, than under the roof of Mr. Ellis. To her he would plead, that it was a holyday; and Mary, with the conſent of Eleanor, would allow the plea. The friends (now

faſt growing into lovers) would then, as the ſeaſons invited them, either betake themſelves with a book to the fire ſide, or would ſtray at the foot, or climb the ſides of the mountains, that bounded the valley of Llamamon.

But pleaſures ſo innocent, ſo pure, ſo untroubled, are given but with a ſparing hand to the ſons and daughters of mortality. Fleeting, as exquiſite, it is but that in eſcaping our graſp, we are made ſenſible that we have once enjoyed them.

CHAP. V.

THE intercourſe between William and Mary could not be carried on without the knowledge of Eleanor; nor indeed had Mary either reaſon or inclination to guard any action or thought from the obſervation of this excellent friend. She had found her one of the fondeſt and moſt indulgent of parents; ſhe repoſed equally on her affection for her happineſs, and on her wiſdom for her ſecurity; from her, therefore, ſhe had not a ſecret; and when converſing with her, her heart was as open as her countenance.

It had not been, however, but after much reaſoning, that Eleanor had allowed a perfect freedom of intercourſe between William and Mary.

When ſhe revolved, in her mind, the poſſibility of Mary being one day reclaimed by her parents, her prudence warned her againſt ſuffering any connexion, which, in that caſe, would be conſidered as diſgraceful, and which muſt be given up, be the ſacrifice what it would.

But when, on the other hand, ſhe was ſtruck with the probability which ſo ſtrongly appeared, that Mary would never be required at her hands, the intereſt and happineſs of a young creature, whom ſhe fondly loved, prevailed over every other conſideration, and ſhe looked, with pleaſure, on the growing partiality of a young man towards her, of whom every body ſpoke well, and whoſe ſituation in life offered to her child all the advantages and comforts of abundance.

In theſe latter ſentiments, ſhe was ſtrengthened by Richard.

Sixteen years were now fully paſſed, and not one word had been heard of Mr. Seabright and Lady Caroline.

"Who can doubt," ſaid Richard, "but that they are dead? or grown ſo rich, that they have forgotten us, and their poor little girl; perhaps they may have other children, and then I warrant they would be aſhamed of your dear Mary. Fine parents, indeed! I think ſhe is more our child than theirs.—We have fed her, clothed her, taught her, and loved her; and is ſhe not good and dutiful to us? But who can tell whether ſhe would be ſo dutiful to a father and mother, who ſhe never ſaw in her life, and who left her for the ravens to feed on, for any thing they cared? I never much fancied either my lady or the Captain; and to tell you a piece of my mind, wife, I don't care if I never ſee either of them again. I am ſure I would rather

rather they ſtayed beyond ſeas for ever, than that they ſhould come to break the true love of William and Mary; and why muſt our poor little girl turn nun for the beſt years of her life, becauſe, forſooth, ſhe may one day be a lady? No, no, wife, let nature take its courſe; it would rejoice my heart to ſee her William Challoner's wife; he deſerves her, if ſhe were a Queen; and, in my mind, ſhe'll be happier at Llanbeder farms than in a palace, aye, and better, too, or I have lived with fine folks too long to know nothing."

Eleanor allowed that Richard had reaſon. "But," ſaid ſhe, "Richard, pride is not confined to fine folks, nor avarice either.—I much queſtion if Humphry Challoner would let his ſon marry our roſe bud, even if he knew who ſhe was, with only her fifty pounds.

"It will be a hundred before ſhe need marry," ſaid Richard; "and where could he do ſo well? Who ſo handy? who ſo induſtrious? who ſo good a houſewife? I'll match

match her the country round for a good wife. But what if Humphry won't? William will; and I take it he's not one to be turned from the *right* way for fifty fathers. Wife, wife, the world will never go right till young folks are ſuffered to chooſe huſbands and wives for themſelves.—Children *often* chuſe ill, it is true, but parents *always*; and Mary ſhall have my conſent to marry William, whenever they can find money to raiſe a couple of cows, and a ſcore of ſheep.—What did we wait for? Till we grew rich, forſooth! and ſo we grew old; and what did we get by that? The riches made themſelves wings, and flew away; but old age goes upon crutches, and is always under our feet. We might have been happy twenty years ſooner than we were, could we have been content with the cottage at Llamamon, and there were we forced to come at laſt, before we could be happy."

Such were the politics of Richard and Eleanor; but thoſe of Humphry and Mrs. Fluellin

Fluellin were widely different. Mrs. Fluellin had remarked the coldneſs of William towards her daughter; ſhe had mentioned it to Humphry, and Humphry watched the motions of his ſon with too lively an intereſt, not to become acquainted with his increaſing attachment to Mary. He was well informed of his viſits, his walks, and his lectures.—Theſe were circumſtances which, as hitherto, they had not been attempted to be concealed, could be told by every body; but to the voice of common fame, was now added that of an inſiduous obſerver, who, under the maſk of friendſhip, ſcrupled not to betray the confidence ſhe ſolicited.

This ſpy was the ſiſter of William; two years older than Mary, ſhe had been, until within the laſt twelvemonths, her companion; and, notwithſtanding the diſſimilarity of their diſpoſitions, for William's ſake, her friend.

William

William had introduced her at the vicarage, and ſhe had frequently made one in their little balls on the green. Theſe were diſtinctions and pleaſures that Jenny by no means diſliked, and for the purchaſe of which ſhe was well content to undergo the chidings of her mother, and the manual reproofs of her father. But within the courſe of the laſt year, the opinions of Jenny had undergone a very ſenſible alteration. She had paſſed that time at *a boarding ſchool for young ladies*, at Dolegelly, where ſhe had been placed at the inſtigation and expence of an aunt.

This lady, on her return to viſit her family connexions at Llanbeder farm, had declared herſelf much ſhocked with the hoyden her niece, and had pronounced ſo abſolutely that ſhe would never riſe in the world, except ſhe was *poliſhed*, that Humphry had yielded all his objections to this mode of education to the eloquence of his ſiſter, backed as it was, by her aſſurance, that ſhe would take

take the expence of the *poliſhing* upon herſelf.

Jenny was now returned from this polite ſeminary, completely ignorant even of the little that had been attempted to be taught her, and with a profound contempt for all who had not had a ſimilar opportunity of throwing away their time.

She talked of nothing but painting, muſic, and French; called Humphry and his wife papa and mamma; dignified her female acquaintance by the appellation of "*Young Ladies*," and eſtabliſhed herſelf as the umpire in all conteſted points of dreſs, and knowledge of the world. To her natural ſtock of ignorance and folly, ſhe had ſuperadded ſo large a ſhare of vanity and ſelf-conceit, that ſhe was become intolerable to all with whom ſhe converſed.

Notwithſtanding thoſe qualities in Jenny, ſo oppoſite to all that would, in any other perſon's

perſon's daughter, have gained the approbation of Humphry, Jenny was a favourite with her father, and this for ſeveral reaſons.

In his heart, he was proud of her ſuppoſed proficiency in arts in which he did not underſtand; and however ſhe exalted herſelf above others, ſhe had ſufficient cunning always to acknowledge his ſuperior wiſdom.—Moreover, ſhe entered warmly and eagerly into his views upon Miſs Fluellin.

As ſhe hated and envied Mary for the notice that ſhe found her beauty now procured her, ſo ſhe affected a vehement affection for Deborah, whoſe fortune gave her conſequence, and whoſe inferiority, in all that Miſs Challoner called *accompliſhments*, placed her below the poſſibility of rivalſhip.

Mary, unconſcious of any revolution in the mind or deſigns of Miſs Challoner, treated her, on her return from Dolegelly, with the ſame familiarity that had ever ſubſiſted between

between them; a familiarity not diſcouraged on the part of Jenny, until ſhe had made herſelf miſtreſs of Mary's ſentiments with reſpect to William, and was perfectly acquainted with the conſtant intercourſe that ſubſiſted between them. From this moment, ſhe ſoon found the means of ſhewing Mary the diſtance that ſhe conceived there was between them, and the ſuperiority to which ſhe laid claim; but ſhe loſt the pleaſure that ſhe had promiſed herſelf, from the conſequent mortification of Mary.

An underſtanding uncommonly good, and a quick ſenſe of what was ridiculous, marked the character of this child of nature.—She ſaw, inſtantly, all the abſurdity of Jenny's pretenſions, yet felt not anger towards a perſon whom ſhe heartily deſpiſed; nor experienced mortification where ſhe acknowledged no inferiority

"Your ſiſter," ſaid ſhe to William, "is turned fool,"—and ſhe thought no more of the matter.

CHAP. VI.

IN the mid way between Llanbeder farm and the cottage of Eleanor, Mary, in the days of her childhood, had diſcovered a ſmall cave, the mouth of which was ſo nearly cloſed up with bruſh-wood, that the entrance was difficult to be diſcovered. There was, however, another aperture, which, opening to the ſouth, admitted both warmth and light.

This cave Mary had delighted to adorn, with a variety of moſſes, foſſils, groteſque pieces

pieces of wood, curious coloured leaves, or whatever elſe of ſimilar ornaments had happened to fall in her way; there had ſhe plunged with the companions of her earlieſt days; and here, when the friendſhip between herſelf and William had began, ſhe had led him, in order to diſplay to his admiring eye all her treaſure of rural ſtores. Here, too, as they advanced in years, they had often taken ſhelter from the ſudden ſtorm, or had loitered away the hour at noon. It was a ſpot inexpreſſibly dear to them both, and had lately become the receptacle of riches much more valuable than any that Mary had been accuſtomed to make it the depoſitory of.

All the money that William could procure, he failed not to lay out in books; but it was almoſt as difficult to ſecure the poſſeſſion of the prize, as to procure it. It had occurred to Mary, that this favourite cave would afford a ſafe refuge for the perſecuted volumes, and, at her inſtigation, William had

had filled up a little book-caſe, well lined, to guard the books as much as poſſible, from the effects of the damp, but had placed it in the darkeſt corner of the cave.

The frequent viſits of Mary and William to this favourite ſpot, had worn away all obſtruction to its entrance; yet, while it only ſerved them as a place of ſhelter, or reſt for themſelves, the additional light and air, reſulting from this circumſtance, had appeared an advantage. But riches are the parents of fear and ſuſpicion. No ſooner were the books lodged within the cave, than ſecurity was preferred to convenience, and nothing was thought too great a ſacrifice to the ſafety of ſo highly valued a treaſure.

William, therefore, carefully reſtored the barriers which originally ſhut up the cave; deſtroyed, as much as he could, all appearance of any road that led to it, and taught Mary another path higher up the mountain,

which led, by a more circuitous route, to the ſouthern opening.

The eſtrangement between Mary and Jenny had taken place before the invention of converting the cove into a library, had been thought of, and this was the ſole cauſe why Jenny was not miſtreſs of this ſecret, as well as all others relative to the lovers.—But her defection from their intereſts had taught William a caution he had never practiſed before, in the management of his interviews with Mary. Reſolute to purſue the dictates of his heart, he was yet willing to eſcape from the continual chidings and quarrels that the tales of Jenny now brought upon him, and he therefore ſought to derive a double advantage, from the obſcurity which he had thrown around the mouth of the cave, both as thereby rendering the place a more ſafe aſylum for his ſtore of knowledge, and as preparing a retreat where he might enjoy the converſation of Mary, unobſerved by any one.

By

By the new track, which they believed to be unknown to every one but themſelves, they had promiſed each other to meet, whenever they could mutually ſteal half an hour from their reſpective occupations.

"I can run here in a moment," ſaid William; "chat an inſtant with you, and be back before I am miſſed."

"I can run as faſt as you," ſaid Mary;—"and I am ſure, my dear mother will never ſay me nay, when ſhe knows I am coming *only* to meet you."

"How pleaſant it will be, in a ſummer's evening, to ſit here, and ſmell the wild thyme," ſaid William.

"How warm in winter, at noon, with the ſun ſhining full upon us," ſaid Mary.

"Let us meet to-morrow evening," ſaid William.

"You may depend upon it," ſaid Mary, and gently withdrawing her hand from William, ſhe haſtened home to make her *dear*

mother acquainted with their little arrangement.

"Oh! my dear child, this muſt not be," ſaid Eleanor, "*you* are too innocent, indeed, to ſee the dangers of ſuch an intercourſe;—but I muſt be mad to ſuffer it; and were it ſafe, it would not be prudent; people would talk; and if you were to accuſtom yourſelf to private meetings with William, there is no evil they would not ſay of you."

"People are very ill-natured," ſaid Mary.

"Not always ſo," returned Eleanor;—"but they are often miſtaken.—However, they would be right in condemning a young woman who meets a young man alone in a cave."

"I have met William there twenty times," ſaid Mary; "and I do not know that we did any thing wrong."

"You have met there by accident," replied Eleanor; "you have reſted yourſelves there for a moment in your walks; there has been no harm in all that; hitherto you have been a child; now you muſt conſider your-

ſelf as a woman, and even your walks alone with William muſt be given up. You have obſerved lately, that I have ſcarcely ever permitted them."

Tears ſtood in poor Mary's eyes.

"Oh! my dear mother, you are ſo kind, ſo gentle, that I know you are right; but what will become of poor William? Humphry Challoner is ſo croſs, and Jenny is grown ſuch a fool, that William ſays I am his only comfort."

"William may viſit you here; you may ſit together in the little arbour, or you may dance together at the good vicar's; but to meet in caves, to walk by yourſelves, nobody knows where, is what I deſire you will never do again."

"I will do every thing you deſire," ſaid Mary; "but for the life of me, I cannot ſee what harm could come of my being with William."

Eleanor, being gifted with ſomewhat more preſcience, inforced her command, and Mary promiſed unlimited obedience. This was the firſt moment in which Mary had failed to find obedience a pleaſure. She was not, however, the leſs reſolved to obey; "for it could not be but that her dear mother was right;" yet ſhe thought it "ſtrange,"—"ſomething hard," "and quite incomprehenſible, how there could be any harm in being with William."

The next day, ſhe recalled to mind the engagement ſhe had made with him. To diſappoint him, ſhe thought was impoſſible; to go without permiſſion, never occurred to her.—She muſt therefore try the ſtrength of her eloquence upon Eleanor.

"I have promiſed to meet William to-night," ſaid ſhe, in a ſupplicating tone;—"and if I do not come, he will think me ſick, and then he will be ſick too. Pray let me go, only for five minutes; I will not ſtay more

more than five minutes, juſt to ſay—I muſt come no more."

"No, no," returned Eleanor; "if William finds you don't meet him, he will come on here, and that will do as well."

"Oh! no," cried Mary, "that will be a double misfortune; for then Humphry will miſs him, and who knows but he may beat him; at beſt, he will not let him have a moment's peace for a week to come."

"Notwithſtanding, I think, you cannot go," ſaid Eleanor.

"It is only once," ſaid Mary; "and you ſhall ſet the hour glaſs, and ſee now, if it is half run out before I come back, going and coming, and all, and talking with William into the bargain."

"You had better take my advice, and ſtay at home," replied Eleanor; "ſome harm will come of it."

"Dear me, what harm? It will be but a moment; we ſhall not have much to ſay;—indeed I have nothing to ſay, but that I muſt come no more."

"Well, you ſhall go," returned Eleanor; "but I fear you will find reaſon to believe me another time; the leaſt miſchief that will come of it will be, that you will break your word with me."

"I'll lay you my new-born kid of that," cried Mary; "break my word, indeed! Did I ever break my word in my life?"

"You will this time, ſaid Eleanor; "but experience is only good when it is bought, and ſo you ſhall do as you pleaſe."

"Yes, and you ſhall ſee how exact I can be; but you need not ſet the hour glaſs till I am out of ſight, you know."

Away bounded Mary as ſwift as the mountain roe, and panting and breathleſs, encountered William at the mouth of the cave.

"Oh! you are come at laſt," cried he;—"every thing favours us; my father ſups at Fluellin hall; Jenny is rambled I know not whither

whither, ſo cannot tell this time; we may enjoy ourſelves all evening."

"We may not enjoy ourſelves an inſtant," cried Mary; "and I am come to tell you ſo."

William ſtood aghaſt.

"My mother ſays I muſt not meet you in bye places, nor walk with you alone; ſhe ſays there is harm in it; I cannot tell why; but I will do as ſhe tells me; and I have promiſed not to ſtay five minutes."

"Is your mother angry with me?"

"Oh! no; you may come to the cottage, and we may ſit in the arbour, and we may dance on the green; and now I have told you this, I muſt be gone."

"Stay, ſtay; this is not a minute.—Stay, I beſeech you," cried he, taking her by the hand.

Mary ſaid ſhe could not ſtay; but ſhe offered not to move, notwithſtanding.

"Only an inſtant," urged William, "to reſt yourſelf; you are out of breath."

"Oh! I muſt not ſit down," ſaid Mary; and ſhe ſuffered William gently to place her on a rock, that projected from the ſide of the cave.

"All our happineſs is overthrown," ſaid Mary, and burſt into tears.

"How can your mother be ſo cruel?

"She is not cruel; but to be ſure ſhe is miſtaken; but ſhe is ſo good, I would not diſobey her for the world; and when ſhe ſees how diſcreet I am, perhaps ſhe may change her mind."

"But how am I to live in the mean time? I have no comfort on earth but you."

Mary wept more and more; and this firſt diſappointment appeared ſo intolerable to the two lovers, that they lamented the loſs of their rendezvous at the cave, as if all the misfortunes in life had befallen them.

No

No wonder, then, if a mind, ſo much grieved, the time paſſed unobſerved away; or if Mary, ſaying every moment ſhe muſt be gone, ſtill remained where ſhe was. The increaſing darkneſs of the cave, which the ſhades of night threw around, at length arouſed her.

"What have I done?" ſaid ſhe; "is this the half hour for which I engaged? Oh! William, let me be gone; if my dear mother ever ſcolded, now, I am ſure, ſhe would have reaſon."

"One kiſs, then, before we part," ſaid William; "it is ſo ſad a parting."

"Oh! no, no," ſaid Mary, while ſhe ſuffered him to preſs his lips to her's.

"Fine doings, fine doings," cried Jenny, ruſhing from behind a buſh at the mouth of the cave; "you are a pretty perſon indeed, to be hugging and kiſſing in the dark; but, I'll tell my papa, I'm reſolved; and if ſomebody would tell your mother, Miſs Mary, it would be all the better for you.—If I were

to do ſuch things, I am ſure mamma would box my ears, and ſerve me right too."

"Tell what?" cried Mary.

"Tell!—why tell—yes, yes, we ſhall have you like Sally Barnes preſently; but you muſt not think *my* brother will marry *you*, Miſs."

All the blood in poor Mary's body ruſhed into her face.

Oh! my mother," ſaid ſhe, "I *ſhould* have done better to have ſtaid at home;"—and ſo ſaying, ſhe turned haſtily from them, and was out of ſight in a moment.

William durſt not follow her, leſt he ſhould increaſe her diſtreſs; and not being able to offer any conſolation to Mary, he indemnified himſelf as well as he could, by venting his anger upon Jenny.

Mary ran till ſhe was out of ſight; but then, notwithſtanding her impatience to be

at home, her heart was too full, and her ſpirits too much diſcompoſed, to ſuffer her to continue her ſpeed; ſhe ſtopped—ſhe wept; then walked haſtily on a few paces; again ſtopped, and again wept.

Eleanor had been alarmed by her ſtay, lengthened as it was, beyond what her foreſight had taught her to expect. She had left the cottage, and was coming down the valley in hopes of meeting her. The moment ſhe eſpied her.

"Mary," ſaid ſhe, "is this your half hour?"

"Oh! my dear mother, ſcold me, beat me; but indeed there is no occaſion;—I ſhall never think myſelf wiſer than you again; all you ſaid was *ſo* true: But pray—pray forgive me."

Eleanor ſaw the diſtreſs and agitation of Mary, and took care not to add to them, by reproaches or chiding.—She ſoon knew all that

that Mary had to tell; and ſuch was the warmth and earneſtneſs of her ſelf-accuſations, and her promiſes of the moſt implicit obedience for the future, that there was little occaſion for any comments or admonitions from Eleanor. Experience had indeed been worth twenty lectures, and Eleanor ſaw, with pleaſure, the humbled air and bluſhing cheek with which Mary, for ſome time after this adventure, purſued her houſehold occupations in ſilent diligence.

CHAP. VII.

BUT the mortification of Mary was not to ſtop here.—Jenny was faithful to her word, and told the ſtory of the cave to her father, with what addition and embelliſhments ſhe thought proper.

It was too much the pleaſure and intereſt of Humphry to leſſen the reputation of Mary, to ſuffer him to let ſuch a hiſtory ſink in oblivion, and Mary had ſoon the vexation of knowing that her adventure in the cave, ſuch as Jenny had choſen to repreſent it, was in the mouth of every body.

William

William was in deſpair; he remonſtrated; he threatened, but all in vain; he gained nothing but courage to put himſelf in open oppoſition to his father, and to declare to him implicitly that he would *not* marry Miſs Fluellin, and that he *would* marry Mary.—Humphry threatened, and William perſiſted; and the breach between them, and the cauſe of it, ſoon reached the ears of Mr. Ellis.

Alarmed, at once, for the integrity of William, and the reputation of Mary, this true father of his flock ſent an order to William, to attend him at the vicarage, and William, in the hopes of making Mr. Ellis his friend, joyfully obeyed the ſummons. The coldneſs with which Mr. Ellis received him, checked, however, his expectation, and made him fear that his cauſe was prejudged.

"William," ſaid Mr. Ellis, "you know how I have loved you;—you know how I have diſtinguiſhed you;—you know what a good opinion I have had of you; what, then,

then are thoſe things that I hear? You quarrel with your father, and you ſeek to ſeduce a young creature, who is innocence itſelf."

"It is falſe," ſaid William, colouring a deep crimſon; "I beg your pardon, Sir, but I muſt ſay it is falſe."

"I am heartily glad to hear it," returned Mr. Ellis; "you are then upon good terms with your father, and you have no deſigns upon Mary?"

"I deſign to marry her," ſaid William.

"With your father's conſent?"

"No, Sir, I muſt not hope for that.

"And what right have you to think of marriage without his conſent?"

"The right of nature, I believe," returned William.—"When we read in the hiſtory of Ruſſia together, Sir, that the Ruſſians marry their ſlaves when, and to whom they will, I remember you ſaid, *that* was a power no relation could give one man over another; that the very duties of the married ſtate forbade it, ſince they required a mutual

love,

love, and a mutual choice.—I believe thoſe were your very words, Sir. I am ſure I thought of Mary at the time; but that no man could chuſe and love at the will of another."

"This may go," ſaid Mr. Ellis, "to abrogating any ſuppoſed right your father may think he has to marry you in oppoſition to your will, but does not eſtabliſh a right for you to marry contrary to his."

"No, Sir, I ſee that; but then I found the right of chuſing for myſelf on my independance."

"Independance! Pray, wherein does it conſiſt?"

"In my health, my ſtrength, my capacity for honeſt labour.—Pray, Sir, forgive me.—I would not make you angry for the world; but have not I heard you ſay, that if you had had reſolution to have truſted to the work of your hands, inſtead of ſuffering yourſelf to be ſhackled by the cuſtoms and prejudices of the world, you had cut off, from your life, twenty years of miſerable exiſtence,

ſpared

ſpared the woman you loved a thouſand mortifications, and perhaps preſerved ſome of your children, to have been a comfort to you in your old age?"

Mr. Ellis ſighed.—"I have ſaid ſo, and I ſaid it with a deſign to inſpire you with the reſolution I ſo long wanted; the reſolution of truſting for happineſs to ourſelves alone."

"Perhaps, Sir," returned William, "ſuch a reſolution was impoſſible in your caſe, but with me it is eaſy.—What ſhould hinder me, who work all day for others, from working for myſelf? My father ſays, if I will not marry Miſs Fluellin, he will turn me out of doors; that he will never give me a farthing, and that I ſhall ſtarve.

"He may turn me out of doors; he may refuſe to give me a farthing; but, if I ſtarve, it is my own fault."

"Yet, without ſtarving," ſaid Mr. Ellis, "there is a wide difference between the abundance and eaſe of Llanbeder farm, and the ſcanty portion and hard labour which muſt

muſt be your lot, if unſupported by your father."

"I am well aware of that," ſaid William; "and for my dear Mary's ſake, I could wiſh my father kinder; but at worſt, our lot will be that of the greater part of the world—and if they can be happy; and I have heard you ſay, Sir, that happineſs is to be found every where; why ſhould not we? And I am ſure all the riches in the world would but ſerve to make me more miſerable with a wife I could not love."

"So all young men ſay, when they are in love," replied Mr. Ellis; "but the caſe alters greatly, when they come to be in poverty; and when a child has done the thing in the world the moſt diſobliging to a parent, if that parent thinks proper to reſent the offence, he is conſidered as cruel, and hard-hearted; and thus the child does not only rob his parent of his peace of mind, but of his good name too.—Do you think this juſtice, William?"

"Oh!

"Oh! no, far from it; I know the terms upon which I muſt marry Mary, and am willing to accept them; and however diſtreſſed I may be, in future, I ſhall never conſider my father as the cauſe of my trouble."

"I queſtion that.—Do you not already think he has no right to with-hold from you the wife you chuſe?"

"I do think ſo; and that he ought to be glad to ſee me happy with Mary; but I do not think that he ought to make me rich, when I tell him I do not care for riches. Let him keep his money for my brothers and ſiſter; let him only give me a ſhare in his love, and good will, which I do not think my marriage with Mary ought to forfeit, and I will aſk no more."

"But were you to fall into poverty, do you think a parent would not feel for your diſtreſs? And then he muſt either be miſerable himſelf, or forego a reſentment which he thinks juſt, and a neceſſary leſſon to the reſt of his children."

"But,

"But, dear Sir, *is* his reſentment juſt? and am I to be made reſponſible for the miſtakes of a parent, who is miſerable only becauſe he chuſes to be ſo? If, in conſequence of my poverty, I aſk him to give me more than my due ſhare of his property, I am wrong, and even unjuſt; but if that due ſhare will ſet me at eaſe, and remove my father's diſtreſs on my account, and he yet with-holds this ſhare, can his unhappineſs be charged to my account?"

"But ſuppoſe he is thus unreaſonable, can you be happy when deprived of the good will and affections of a parent?"

"No, Sir, not perfectly happy; but it will not be my fault; and if I were to give up Mary, my father would be equally ſevere and unkind, if, at the ſame time, I would not marry Miſs Fluellin; and that, Sir, I know you would think me wicked, if I did, while I could not love her."

"So then you conſider your father's diſpleaſure in all caſes as inevitable? and perhaps

haps think the poſſeſſion of Mary your beſt indemnification."

"I do, Sir; and pray do not tell me I am wrong.—My father knows, in all things, that I can obey him to the utmoſt.—I don't mean to praiſe myſelf; but he has no reaſon to find fault with my induſtry or my diligence. All I aſk is, that I may turn them to my own account, and endeavour to make ſome little beginning in the world, that I may have ſomething to offer Mary."

"You would not, then, if you could, marry Mary directly?"

"No, Sir; nor do I think that ſhe would conſent; ſhe will ſcarce ever let me talk of love and marriage, and always ſays ſhe will not marry to be a burthen to any body."

"She is in the right of it," ſaid Mr. Ellis.—"To make others pay for our pleaſures, is what no generous mind can bear."

"I am ſure I am of that opinion," returned William; but when I can maintain a wife, I hope, Sir, you'll think I have a right to

chuſe

chuſe for myſelf; and that in no circumſtances I am obliged to marry one of another perſon's chuſing? And moreover, I hope you do not think there is the *ſin* of diſobedience in all this?"

"I do not think there is.—But remember your own principles; you are to ſeek to conciliate your father, by all the means in your power; you are to require nothing from him but his good will and affection, nor in any caſe to receive more than your due ſhare of his property, and you are not to purchaſe ſelfiſh gratification at the expence of others. Keep theſe principles in view, and I am not afraid to ſay that you may purſue your paſſion for Mary, not only without blame, but with the approbation of all good hearts; and my opinion, I believe, is ſanctioned by ſome of the wiſeſt and beſt men of the age."

"Heaven bleſs you, Sir," cried William, in a tranſport; "ſure you were born to give happineſs to all who know you."

"your father," returned Mr. Ellis, will not, perhaps, be of that opinion; but in preaching

preaching *truth*, I think I beſt conſult the intereſt of ſociety in general, however it may ſeem to militate againſt thoſe of any one perſon in particular. But William, there is another caution;—if you do not hold the innocence of Mary as ſacred."

"Oh! Sir," interrupted William, indignantly, "it is all malice, calumny, and ſpite.—I need not boaſt of what *I* would not do; for if I could be ſuch a wretch as to forget, for an inſtant, her ſpotleſs purity, I well know it would be the laſt ſhe would ever ſuffer me to ſee her."

Here ended the converſation between William and Mr. Ellis, much to the ſatisfaction of both parties.

If Mr. Ellis were pleaſed with the good ſenſe, integrity, and ſpirit of William, William was no leſs ſo with the ſanction his paſſion had received from one whom he regarded as the oracle of wiſdom and goodneſs itſelf.

CHAP. VIII.

SINCE the adventure of the cave, William had never ventured to approach the cottage; and when he and Mary had accidentally met, it was only by a distant regard on his side, and a timid one on her's, that they had ventured to explain what passed in their hearts.—But, emboldened as William now felt himself, he was resolved not to lose a moment in renewing their more direct intercourse.

With a light step, and a beating heart, he turned from the vicarage towards the cottage.

Mary

Mary was buſy in the garden; on the ſight of William, ſhe fled to the houſe, as if to take refuge under the wing of her mother. William was there as ſoon as herſelf.

"You need not fly me now, Mary," ſaid he; "for I come to ſpeak to you in the preſence of Mrs. Morgan."

"Had you always taken that precaution," ſaid Eleanor, "it might have been as well, young man."

"Oh! my good mother," cried William, who was too happy to be much in penitentials, "it would have tired you to have liſtened to all our prattle; but I am ſure I never ſaid any thing behind your back that I would not have ſaid before your face; and now, pray be ſo kind as to intercede with Mary, that ſhe may forgive me all the vexation I have occaſioned her. Indeed it was my fault, that ſhe out-ſtayed her time; but my ſiſter's malice was not my fault, for we did nothing to provoke it; nothing of which we had any reaſon to be aſhamed."

While poor Mary ſtood bluſhing and trembling by the ſide of Eleanor, William was come cloſe up to her, and, as he ſaid, the laſt words, would have taken her hand. Mary withdrew it.

"Give him your hand," ſaid Eleanor;—"you were both fooliſh indiſcreet children, who thought yourſelves wiſer; but you will be humbler for the future; at leaſt I can anſwer for Mary; and then I need not be afraid of you, William."

"You need never be afraid of me," returned he, as he fondly graſped Mary's hand in his; "there is not a drop of blood in my veins that I would not let out, rather than injure Mary in thought, word, or deed;—and that ſhe may not be deceived, I come to tell her, before you, that I have no hopes from my father; if I marry my dear Mary, he will never give me a penny; ſo my dear love, if you do not know how to be poor, I muſt; I muſt loſe you."

"I

"I have been poor all my life long," ſaid Mary; but I have been happy."

"I have nothing," ſaid William, "but my heart and my hand to offer you; but if you will accept theſe, the one ſhall love you always, and the other work early and late to ſupport you."

"We will both work," ſaid Mary; "but why ſhould you be poor for my ſake?"

"Becauſe I love you better than riches.—I am juſt come from Mr. Ellis, and he ſays I may love you, although my father ſays I may not; and if he had ſaid the contrary, it would have been all the ſame; for I ſhould not have been able to have done otherways."

"And pray," interrupted Eleanor, "can you live upon this love?"

"Upon love and labour we can," ſaid William; "but I will not aſk Mary to marry me, until I have a ſnug houſe to take her to, and a cow or two at leaſt for her to take care of; and when I have all this, will you, my dear mother, give your conſent, that ſhe may be my wife?"

Although Eleanor was well content to ſuffer the loves of William and Mary to take their courſe, and to reſerve herſelf to act in future as circumſtances might ariſe, yet was ſhe ſhocked at the thought of entering upon an engagement which ſhe knew it might be wholly out of her power to fulfil.

The probability that ſhe ſhould ever hear more of Lady Caroline, leſſened every day; but the poſſibility remained; and in this poſſibility ſhe ſaw a thouſand evils, if William and Mary were to be engaged to each other, and engaged with her conſent.—Theſe conſiderations prevented her making any prompt reply to what William laſt ſaid. While ſhe heſitated, he thus continued to urge his plea.

"You need not be afraid, indeed, my good mother, of giving me this little comfort. Alas! I ſhall want more than you can beſtow, through the long, long time that I muſt wait for my Mary. My father declares

clares he will not ſuffer me to do a ſtroke of work for myſelf until I am twenty-one, and that I ſhall not be theſe eighteen months, three weeks, and two days, and then it is to be, that I am to take my choice whether I am to marry Miſs Fluellin, or be turned out of doors.—Out of doors I ſhall go; for I would not marry Deborah if there were not another woman in the world, and then I ſhall work for myſelf: But after that, how long will it be before I can furniſh a houſe, and buy a couple of cows; ſo if I am not quite ſure of your conſent at laſt, I really think I ſhall die of deſpair."

"No fear, no fear of that," ſaid Eleanor; "we die of every thing but love and deſpair. Beſides, I ſee no good in making a promiſe, and a great deal of harm in doing ſo.—If you both keep in the ſame mind until the time you mention, there will be no need of a promiſe to bring you together; and if you ſhould have changed your opinions, you ought not to marry, though you had promiſed."

"But if we are in the ſame mind," ſaid William, "will you then give your conſent? for Mary tells me ſhe will never marry to grieve you."

"No, indeed," ſaid Mary; "for though William may marry againſt his father's conſent, who has always been ſo croſs and ill-natured with him, and beſides, would have him marry one he cannot love; it would be the moſt ungrateful thing in the world, if I were to vex you, my dear mother; you, who have been always ſo kind to me, and who, I am ſure, if you were to ſay, "Mary, you muſt not marry William," would ſay it for my good, and without thinking of money."

"Will you then give me your conſent?" urged William.

"If things ſhould happen as you ſay," returned Eleanor, "I will do nothing to prevent your marriage."

"Why, that's giving your conſent; and now, my dear Mary (cried he, embracing her) I am ſure of you."

"Don't

"Don't be too ſure," ſaid Eleanor; "I cannot think Mary is born for you."

"Oh! my dear mother," cried William; "you are no witch; and I would not have you one in this caſe for all the world."

"I wiſh, however, my mother had not ſaid ſo," ſaid Mary, tears ſtarting to her eyes; "I hardly ever knew her miſtaken."

"Well, to comfort you," ſaid Eleanor, "if you do marry William, "you ſhall not come portionleſs to him; you ſhall bring him more than will pay for the two cows, and furniſh the houſe into the bargain; ſo let him do his part, and we will ſee what can be done on ours."

"William did not throw himſelf at her feet, or fall a kiſſing her hands, but he ſaid all that a grateful heart, and manly underſtanding could dictate. Mary wept, and hugged her mother; and, to complete the joy of the two lovers, Eleanor gave them leave to ſpend an hour in the arbour together.

When Eleanor repeated what had paſſed to Richard, his honeſt pleaſure was extreme.

"God grant," ſaid he, "that no Lady Caroline and her Captain come to ſpoil our joy, and we ſhall be the happieſt people in Merionethſhire."

Mr. Ellis, who had the welfare of William and Mary ſincerely at heart, did not content himſelf with the admonitions and cautions he had beſtowed upon William; he did more; he endeavoured to bring Humphry Challoner to reaſon; but he ſpoke to the deaf.—Reaſon, Humphry had none in oppoſition to his intereſt; and his intereſt he could not conceive to conſiſt in any thing but the accumulation of wealth.

He told Mr. Ellis that he ought to be aſhamed to uphold William in his rebellion; threatened to complain to the Biſhop; and to repreſent him as the ſower of diſſention between father and ſon.

Mr.

Mr. Ellis ſmiled at his threats, and did not leſs ſtrongly enforce what he believed to be the duty of a parent to a child, for being thus reproached as not underſtanding the duty of a child to a parent.—It was, however, all in vain.

Humphry was reſolved that William ſhould marry Miſs Fluellin, or ſtarve; and he told Mr. Ellis, that, as by his advice, his ſon would ſoon loſe all the comforts of this life, he was doubly bound to teach him the way to gain the goods of another.

Mr. Ellis, giving up all hopes of being able to move the heart of this tender parent, turned his thoughts to other means of aſſiſting his favourite.

Humphry had abſolutely refuſed to ſuffer William to ſtir from Llanbeder farm until he had completed his one and twentieth year; and Mr. Ellis hoped, before that time had elapſed, that he ſhould be able to

procure him ſome employment, which might enable him to provide for himſelf, and put him in a ſituation to marry Mary.

While theſe benevolent thoughts buſied the mind of Mr. Ellis, the lovers, happy in their proſpects, and ſubmitting cheerfully to the reſtrained intercourſe, which the prudence of Eleanor impoſed, thought not of the ſtorm juſt ready to burſt over their heads, or of the rugged road, which, if they *were* to be happy at laſt, was deſtined to lead them to happineſs.

CHAP. IX

THE beauty of Mary, and the paſſion of William, were become the general diſcourſe of the country; and while every young man wiſhed for ſo beautiful a miſtreſs as Mary, every young woman was deſirous of ſo diſintereſted and generous a lover as William.

Miſs Fluellin tried every art of coquetry, aided by ſuch ornaments, as never, till now, her mother had allowed her to aſſume, to ſnatch ſo valuable a prize from her rival;—but ſhe exhauſted her blandiſhments and her

her finery in vain; William had no heart but for Mary, and leaſt of all for Miſs Fluellin. Mary, on the other ſide, found herſelf aſſailed by numerous lovers, but to all except William, ſhe was cold and haughty: His, was the only noſegay ſhe wore in her boſom; his, the only ribbon with which ſhe adorned her hair; and while ſhe gloried in her paſſion for him, to have judged, by her manner to others, it might have been ſuppoſed ſhe was incapable of any paſſion at all. This coldneſs, it is probable, proceeded not more from the prior attachment to William than from her natural good taſte. The cultivated mind, and gentle manners of this young man, raiſed him far above all his companions; and Mary, in preferring him to all others with whom ſhe converſed, only ſhewed her ſenſe of excellence.

The intercourſe of William and Mary was not only the overflowing love of two tender hearts, it was alſo the mutual interchangement of the treaſures of the underſtanding,

and the cultivation of the nobleſt propenſities of the mind.

The converſation of Mr. Ellis, which they had both ſo long and ſo freely enjoyed, had opened to them ſtores of knowledge, and had given them a delicacy of feeling, which is not to be attained by aſſimilating ourſelves to the uncultivated manners of ruſtic life. Without being ſenſible of any ſuperiority, they mutually found a ſomething in each other, for which they looked in vain elſewhere; and whilſt, in their ſports and their labours they mixed happily and eaſily with their equals in life, it was in their private walks, and retired converſation, that they found that charm, for which alone it ſeemed worth while to live.

The ſuperiority, however, which they thought not of, and far leſs laid claim to, ſeemed to be acknowledged by all who aſſociated with them.

William

William was conſidered as next in rank to Mr. Ellis, with reſpect to learning and good breeding; and in every action of Mary there was an elegance and grace, which her companions were unable to deny or to imitate. Nor was it alone in the valley of Llamamon that the charms of Mary were felt and confeſſed.

During the ſummer, in which the adventure of the cave had happened, ſhe had been ſeen by the owner of half the farms around. This gentleman, who was known in the neighbourhood by the appellation of the 'Squire, was a young man of four or five and twenty, of ancient family, and large poſſeſſions; and having gone through the uſual modes of education, was now diſplaying the effects of ſuch tuition in the great world.

The family ſeat was within three miles of the valley of Llamamon; but it had now been converted into a farm houſe for more than forty years, with the reſervation only of

a few rooms, which were occaſionally occupied by the owner of the eſtate, when either buſineſs or inclination led him to view this part of his property. The uſual reſidence of the family was at another manſion, ſituated in one of the counties bordering on the metropolis; and even this, the preſent worthy repreſentative of the ancient honours, and hoſpitality of the Wynnes, had reſigned for the more ſnug pleaſures, and more ſelfiſh expence of a villa within ten miles of town.

Mr. Wynne had viſited Merionethſhire, for the firſt time ſince he had acquired the full right of miſ-uſing his property, during the period before-mentioned; and as Humphry Challoner was one of his principal tenants, he had learn'd from himſelf the views he had for his ſon, in connecting him with the Fluellin family, and the obſtruction thoſe views met with from William's obſtinate adherence to a girl, whom Humphry repreſented as not of the beſt character.

"Is the girl handſome?" ſaid Mr. Wynne.

"Folks

"Folks ſay ſo," returned Humphry;—"but handſome is that handſome does; and whether ſhe is handſome or not, ſhe is no match for a ſon of mine; and if he marries her, I will never give him a ſingle halfpenny."

It is probable that Mr. Wynne did not ſubſcribe to Humphry's definition of beauty; he certainly thought it loſt none of its attractions, by being acceſſable; and ſhaking Humphry by the hand, with a kindneſs ſuitable to the benevolence of his intention.

"Come, come, man," ſaid he, "don't fret yourſelf; if the girl's really handſome, I'll warrant there ſhall be found means of removing her out of the way of your ſon;—he is a fine young fellow, and he ought to have a wife that will put him forward in the world."

Humphry acknowledged his obligation to his honour, but added, "ſhe has a mother, and pleaſe your worſhip, that guards her as if ſhe were the apple of her eye; and thoſe that

that get at her without Madam Morgan's conſent, muſt be cunning indeed."

"Never you fear," returned Mr. Wynne, "there are thoſe whoſe cunning will outmatch any watchfulneſs in the world, when a pretty girl's in the caſe; and take my word for it, you ſhall not long be diſturbed upon this beauty's account."

The love of miſchief had, in Mr. Wynne's boſom, no other rival than the love of pleaſure: or rather, perhaps, it was that ſpecies of pleaſure in which he moſt delighted; but when miſchief was the means, and pleaſure the end, he thought he had nothing further to aſk of fortune.

To poſſeſs a pretty girl, and to outwit a watchful mother, ſeemed to him the ſummit of human wit and human happineſs. No wonder, then, if, by Humphry's deſcription of Mary, and her ſituation, he felt himſelf fired to "deeds of noble daring;" and the farther accounts that he heard from others,

of

of the charms of his intended victim, ſerved but the more to rouſe him to immediate action.

There was no difficulty in getting a ſight of Mary; and the moment he had ſeen her, there wanted no other motive than her beauty to fix him immoveably in the purpoſe he had already formed; but to ſee Mary, and to converſe with her, were widely different.

It has been remarked, that however unſuſpicious and frank ſhe was with William, to all other men ſhe was reſerved and cold; and to her natural temper, in this reſpect, was now added her lately acquired diſcretion.—She had learnt to doubt herſelf; and ſhe had found that the greateſt innocence of intention alone cannot ſecure us from the cenſure of the world.

Her feelings, and her principles, however, would not, moſt probably, have operated immediately

immediately in the diſfavour of Mr. Wynne, had his firſt attacks been made with more caution.

From the ſuperiority of his rank in life, ſhe was unſuſpicious of any familiarity on his part; and her ſentiments towards him being thoſe only of reſpect, ſhe regarded him without fear or ſhyneſs.

When firſt, therefore, he ſaw her, and haſtily ſtopping his horſe, aſked her if ſhe were not the beauty of Llamamon, ſhe replied courteſying, with a bluſh and a ſmile, "No, and pleaſe your Honor."

"By my ſoul," ſaid he, jumping from his horſe, "but you are; and I muſt puniſh you, my pretty one, for telling me a falſehood."

"Stand off," ſaid Mary; "whoever I am, I am not for you."

Mr.

Mr. Wynne caught hold of her; but ſhe, eluding his graſp, fled, with the ſwiftneſs of an arrow, to the ſhelter of the cottage, which was not many yards diſtant.

From this moment, Mary regarded Mr. Wynne with diſguſt and reſentment; ſhe felt herſelf offended, and conſidered the liberty that he had preſumed to take with her as the complicated impertinence of conſcious ſuperiority, and unbridled libertiniſm. She wanted no warnings, no counſels here; the native dignity of unſullied virtue taught her all that the moſt lengthened experience could have done. Hence, although Mr. Wynne frequently continued to throw himſelf in her way, he was never able to engage her regards for a moment; and as ſhe obſerved that he loitered perpetually around the cottage, ſhe ſcarcely ſtirred beyond the limits of its little garden, and never without a companion.

One

One evening, when a number of the young villagers were aſſembled on the green before the door of the vicarage, engaged in their cuſtomary exerciſe of dancing, Mr. Wynne rode by; he had been indeed in purſuit of Mary; and he was rejoiced to find her in a ſituation where ſhe could not run away from him.—He immediately alighted; and having made his compliments to Mr. Ellis, to whom he was well known, he ſtood for ſome time obſerving the dancers; then, at the cloſe of a dance, mingling familiarly with them, he began to praiſe the complexion of one, and the eyes of another, and the teeth of a third.—They were moſtly the children of his tenants, and appeared pleaſed with the good humour and condeſcenſion of their landlord.

"Come, come," ſaid he, "I muſt have a dance amongſt you; nothing delights me ſo much as innocent gaiety; here, William, reſign your pretty partner to me for one dance; I cannot ſtay for any more."

"She

"She is mine to keep," pleaſe your Honor," returned William, "but not to give away; that depends upon herſelf."

"Come, then, Mary," ſaid Mr. Wynne, "I know you will not refuſe me for one dance."

"Excuſe me, Sir," ſaid ſhe; "I have already a partner; but there is poor Sukey Williams, ſhe juſt loſt her's; it will be a kindneſs if your Honor will dance with her."

Sukey Williams to a clumſey perſon, added a face deeply ſcarred with the ſmall pox, which had no ornament but a large quantity of buſhy hair, of the deepeſt red; the malicious archneſs of the recommendation ſtruck every one, and raiſed a general ſmile at the expence of "his Honor;" nor was the inclination to mirth leſſened by the ill grace, and viſible reluctance with which Mr. Wynne went through the taſk that Mary had impoſed. The moment it was over, he haſtily departed, ſaying, however, in a low voice to Mary, as he paſſed her,

her, "the day of payment will come, my ſaucy pretty one, and I ſhall not die in your debt."

This threat had cauſed Mary to double her uſual diligence, in avoiding the poſſibility of meeting Mr. Wynne any where, and above all, alone; and her endeavours had ſo well ſucceeded, that, from the above-mentioned evening, he had never again been able to get a ſight of her, except at a conſiderable diſtance, while he continued in the country.

The impreſſion of her beauty had, however, ſunk deep into his heart; her coyneſs, and the diſtance ſhe kept him at, had preſerved it uneffaced; he was reſolved, if poſſible, to poſſeſs her; and ſomething of a deſire of vengeance, for the diſdain with which ſhe had treated him, mingling with his ſofter paſſions, he ſolemnly determined to make the purſuit of Mary the principal buſineſs of his next viſit to Merionethſhire.

CHAP. X.

IN the mean time, the winter wore away amidſt the uſual delights, and the uſual chagrins of the lovers—if they ſtill continued to meet in Mr. Ellis's library, or found a noontide hour in which to enjoy themſelves tête-á-tête in the arbour: Humphry, on the other ſide, relaxed not in the cruelty of his conduct, nor of his reſolutions, nor the diligent Jenny in her watchfulneſs. The benevolence of Mr. Ellis, however, kept pace with the bad paſſions of theſe kind relations, and he laboured earneſtly to eſtabliſh the happineſs

pineſs and independence of William, as his parent ſought to deſtroy both.

The teazings of Mr. Wynne were, in the mean time, forgotten; and as it was not the cuſtom of his family to viſit Merionethſhire above once in five or ſix years, all thoughts of him were ſoon baniſhed from the mind of Mary.

The ſummer, however, approached, and it was ſcarcely began, before Mr. Wynne again made his appearance in the valley of Llamamon.

Mary, although by no means pleaſed with his unexpected return, was far from imputing it to any attractions of her own. The impertinencies he had been guilty of the year before, ſhe regarded as proceeding from a conſciouſneſs of ſuperiority, which gave him a right to diſregard thoſe decorums which are mutually obſerved between equals; and this thought would have been alone ſuf-

ficient, in the dignified mind of Mary, to have rendered vain all his attempts to attract her notice; but it never entered into her head, that, by ſuch manners, he could hope to gain upon her heart; and ſtill leſs, that he could form a deſign of poſſeſſing her perſon, independent of her affections.—She imagined, either that he would find ſome other object on which to exerciſe his unpolite gallantry, or that, at worſt, ſhe ſhould only have to confine herſelf again to her cottage, for the few weeks that he ſhould continue in the country. Quickly, however, ſhe found how ill-grounded were all her reaſonings.

From the firſt moment that he was able to approach her, it appeared evidently that he had formed a regular plan to recommend himſelf to her approbation, and that there was nothing that he would leave untried to accompliſh this end.

He

He no longer aſſumed that air of impertinent ſuperiority, which he had perceived was ſo repulſive to Mary, but rather approached her with the ſuppliant manners of a lover, who acknowledged that his deſtiny was in her hands.

Mary was as much abaſhed by what ſhe thought an undue condeſcenſion, as ſhe had been offended by what ſhe had conſidered as an unauthoriſed impertinence, and as eager to rid herſelf of the one as ſhe had been to do ſo of the other.

In the ſame breath with which ſhe thanked "his Honor" for his good opinion, ſhe frankly told him, that her affections were already given, and that ſhe had no heart to beſtow.

As Mary expected that this barrier to his wiſhes would appear as inſurmountable to Mr. Wynne as it did to herſelf, ſhe was not a little ſurpriſed to obſerve that it had little effect

upon him, that he continued his pleadings for her favour as vehemently as ever; that he even ſeemed to bribe her to inconſtancy, by attempting to dazzle her ſenſes by a diſplay of the elegancies and ſplendor with which he ſhould be able to ſurround her, and that he evidently diſcovered a confident hope that ſuch temptations would not be unavailing.

Mary had no ſuſpicion that all theſe allurements were not offered to her as a wife; but even under this idea, ſhe experienced not the ſlighteſt wavering as to the acceptance of them; what then was her indignation, when ſhe began to perceive the real ſtation to which Mr. Wynne meant to *raiſe* her? It was indeed the innocence of her heart, and her ignorance of the world, rather than any deſign in Mr. Wynne that had deceived her for a moment: For as Mr. Wynne had never conceived it poſſible that he ſhould make the daughter of a Welch cottager his wife; ſo it had not occurred to him that ſo abſurd an idea could enter into the head

of

of any one elſe; and if his expreſſions had not, from the firſt, been perfectly explicit, it was only becauſe he did not imagine his real deſigns could admit of a doubt.

All the conſideration with which Mary had ſuppoſed herſelf obliged to treat him, while ſhe imagined he offered her his hand, and his name, vaniſhed in an inſtant, when ſhe found that it was alone his fortune and his perſon that he meant to lay at her feet.

Reſuming, in a moment, the ſpirit of diſdain and ſarcaſm, with which ſhe had repulſed his approaches the preceding ſummer, ſhe became either inacceptable to all his attempts to converſe with her, or, when compelled to liſten to him, ſhe treated him with a coldneſs and contempt that ſtung his pride to the quick, and added the ſtimulative of revenge to the impulſe of paſſion.

His aſtoniſhment, indeed, was nearly equal to his reſentment or his love, when he found

that the ſofter treatment he had for ſome little time received from Mary, and from which he had drawn the moſt flattering prognoſtics, was nothing more than the marks of that civility with which ſhe conſidered herſelf bound to reject; an offer, which, however little tempting to her to accept, would have argued no common paſſion in Mr. Wynne to have made; and he ſcarcely was able to yield to the conviction, that a tender of *all* he had to beſtow, had obtained from Mary only the favour of a *gentle* refuſal.

Hopeleſs as he now was, of intereſting her heart in his favour, or of engaging her vanity in his cauſe, Mr. Wynne gave not over his purſuit; he ſtill flattered himſelf he might gain that from force or ſurpriſe, which he could not obtain as the gift of love, or the ſacrifice of ambition; and while he began more ſecret and nefarious ſchemes for the attainment of his ends, he ceaſed not to aſſail Mary by preſents, by vows, and proteſtations:

tions: Sometimes by railleries upon her principles, and ſometimes by ſarcaſms upon her paſſion for William, who, he repreſented, as unworthy of poſſeſſing beauty and delicacy ſuch as her's; his preſents were returned;—to his vows and proteſtations ſhe was deaf;—to his railleries ſhe anſwered with the calm diſdain of reaſon, which knows itſelf to be right; and, in return to his ſarcaſms upon William, ſhe knew how to place his virtues, in contraſt with Mr. Wynne's vices, as even to conjure up a bluſh upon that cheek, which had never before been ſuffuſed with ſuch a mark of ingenuous ſhame.

By this conduct on the part of Mary, the paſſion of Mr. Wynne became every day more inflamed, and his reſentment more irritated.—Perſuaded as he was, that he had nothing to hope from Mary, but that which ſhe could not with-hold, he was reſolved not to loſe a moment in perfecting thoſe meaſures from which he hoped to obtain the poſſeſſion of her perſon; and ſo little tenderneſs was

there mixed with that inclination, which he dignified with the name of love, that he pleaſed himſelf in anticipating the deſpair and agony to which he was about to reduce the object of it.

In the interim, his attentions towards her nad become the diſcourſe of the neighbourhood.—It was equally impoſſible that they ſhould eſcape the notice of William, or fail to excite both his jealouſy and indignation; he had more than once interpoſed to reſcue Mary from the wearying affiduities of Mr. Wynne, when ſhe was ſo ſituated, that ſhe could not herſelf eſcape from them. More than once had he explicitly declared the ſenſe he had of the iniquity of his deſigns, and profeſſed himſelf the champion of Mary, and he and Mr. Wynne now never met without interchanging both ſuch looks and words, as their profeſſed rivalſhip and mutual hatred were likely to produce.

In

In vain was the authority of Humphry exerted to compel William to a more reſpectful conduct towards his landlord; and the threats of Mr. Wynne himſelf, to make him ſuffer for his temerity, ſerved only to inflame his reſentment, and excite him to a more open diſplay of it.

Mary, who trembled alike for the conſequences that might follow, from her being expoſed to the attacks of Mr. Wynne, or of her being defended from them by William, betook herſelf once more to the expedient of confining herſelf to the cottage, and there waiting, with as much patience as ſhe could command, the departure of her tormentor from Merionethſhire.

The preparations of Mr. Wynne were now in perfect readineſs; but he ſaw it was in vain to hope for an opportunity of putting them into action, while Mary continued thus on her guard; he therefore quitted the country, and in ſuch a manner, as

made it believed he would return there no more.

A few evenings after Mary was thus reſtored to her freedom, as ſhe was returning home alone from an excurſion, that ſhe had made with one of her companions, her way led her near that diſtinguiſhed cave ſo dear to her, and where ſhe had once promiſed herſelf to paſs ſo many happy hours with William.—She had never ventured to viſit it ſince that unfortunate night when ſhe had been ſurpriſed there by Miſs Challoner, but ſhe knew that it ſtill continued a favourite retreat with William; and not unfrequently would he regret to her, that they were not allowed, in ſome ſuch aſylum, to begin to taſte that happineſs which he foretold as the certain attendant upon their union, and which, he feared, prudential conſiderations would too long delay.

As ſhe approached this conſecrated ſpot, ſhe felt a longing deſire, once more, to review

view its hallowed ſeats, and to feaſt her eyes with the initials of her own name, cut in cyphers on the ſides of the cave, with thoſe of William.

She had no reaſon to ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould meet him there, as ſhe knew he was engaged that day at ſome little diſtance from Llanbeder; nor was there any other inconvenience or danger that ſhe knew of to be apprehended in gratifying her curioſity and affection, by a momentary reſt in a ſpot ſo dear and ſacred to her imagination.

Theſe conſiderations induced her to turn her ſteps towards the cave; ſhe approached its mouth; ſhe looked in; ſhe found it was unoccupied, and heſitated not to enter, and ſeat herſelf on one of the ſtones that projected from its ſides.—Here, as ſhe looked around her, ſhe beheld the corner where ſhe knew that William ſtill hoarded his highly valued books, and ſhe examined, with delight, the various marks that the walls of the

cave

cave bore of his paſſion for her. Not only her name myſteriouſly carved, preſented itſelf to her obſervation on every ſide, but innumerable couplets, and poetical lines, bore witneſs to the delicacy and the ardour of his love;—for ſhe remarked, that while to her they were eaſy to be underſtood, to all others they muſt appear unintelligible.

Loſt in that delirium of delight which can only be known to a heart innocent and ardent as her own, Mary continued, for ſome time, to employ the luxury of her own thoughts, regardleſs of the diſtance that ſtill lay between her and home; but ſhe was haſtily awakened from her reverie, by a ſudden darkneſs overſhadowing, in a moment, the cave. She looked towards the entrance, expecting no other intruder than ſome wandering animal, that was come to ſhare the ſhelter of the place with her.—But what was her ſurpriſe and alarm, when ſhe beheld the equally dreaded and hated form of Mr. Wynne?

She

She aroſe quick as lightning, hoping, with one ſpring, to make her eſcape from the cave, and take her flight down the hill. Her hope was vain; Mr. Wynne caught her in his arms.

"Beyond my hopes, beyond my expectations," cried he; "now, now, my pretty one, you ſhall pay for all your coldneſs, for all your ſarcaſms.—Nay, ſtruggle not (added he) though I am not the perſon you expected, you ſhall have no reaſon to complain of a diſappointment."

"Let me go," ſaid Mary, burſting with indignation at the liberties he took with her; "let me go.—I expected no one here;—and you, of your whole ſex, are the leaſt welcome."

"We ſhall be better friends before we part," cried Mr. Wynne.

"Rather eternal foes," cried Mary, redoubling her efforts to eſcape from him, but all in vain.—The cries, the prayers, the deſpair of the poor victim, would have availed her

her nothing, had not Providence, at that moment, ſent her beloved William to her reſcue. Accident had brought him to the mouth of the cave; at the cry of diſtreſs, he ruſhed within it, and in the ſame moment, and with one blow, he levelled Mr. Wynne at his feet.

"Raſcal!—villain!"—exclaimed Mr. Wynne.

"Take back the words," cried William; "he is a raſcal, he is a villain that oppreſſes innocence; not he that protects it.—My dear Mary! my love! my beſt love! be not alarmed; you are ſafe;—theſe arms (cried he, embracing her) ſhall now, and ever be your ſafeguard.

Mary, trembling, almoſt fainting, ſuffered herſelf, unreſiſting, to be preſſed, for a moment, to the palpitating heart of William; but recovering herſelf, "Oh! let me begone," cried ſhe, weeping; "be gone, for ever,

ever, from this fatal cave, ſurely prepared for my undoing."

"I will go with you," ſaid William (wholly inattentive to the impotent rage and threats of Mr. Wynne) "and when with me, ſurely you will fear no harm."

And ſo ſaying, he wrapped one arm around her, and giving a violent puſh with the other to Mr. Wynne, who, juſt then recovering his feet, ſeemed to be aiming a blow at him, he ruſhed out of the cave with his reſcued Mary, and bore away the prize, unmoleſted by his rival.

CHAP. XI.

NOTHING could be more humiliating or irritating than the ſtate in which William left Mr. Wynne.—Detected in an attempt to commit the baſeſt action that can diſgrace humanity, without the means to ſupport himſelf in his villany, or retaliate the chaſtiſement it had brought upon him.

In perſonal ſtrength, the gentleman was by no means a match for the peaſant; and except, in the firſt moments of his rage, he would have thought his *pure* blood degraded by

by ſuch a conteſt. Thoſe means of revenge, which put the weak and the ſtrong upon a footing, were here out of the queſtion.—The high-ſpirited Mr. Wynne would have diſdained to have drawn his ſword upon the ſon of his tenant, though he had not ſcrupled to offer him an injury more dreadful to his feelings than it would have been to have plunged that ſword into his boſom. The diſcipline of the horſe-whip recurred forcibly to the mind of Mr. Wynne, but he could not flatter himſelf that he ſhould readily find the means to inflict it; or, if inflicted, that it would not meet with ſuch returns from William, in a country where the laws are equal in their awards to culprits of every rank, as would ſpread his own infamy and diſgrace wider, and redounded more to the emolument and honour of William, than any puniſhment he could have impoſed would have operated to the contrary.

He had indeed accumulated reaſons not to provoke any public inquiry into the circumſtances

cumſtances which had brought down William's vengeance upon him; and his deſire of revenge was fully equalled, by his wiſh that that revenge might be ſecret.

His unexpected appearance at the cave had been produced by his having brought his plan againſt Mary to full maturity, and the next riſing ſun was to have ſeen its completion.—He knew it was her cuſtom, when not confined to the cottage by her fears of him, to paſs each morning, at an early hour, through that path of the valley of Llamamon which led directly under the brow of the hill in which the cave was ſituated. The cave was well known to Mr. Wynne, and here he had determined to place himſelf, and three truſty villains, through the night, with the deſign of ruſhing ſuddenly upon her from their retreat, and bearing her away, even before ſhe knew her danger.

It was for the purpoſe of reconnoitring the ſpot, and aſſuring himſelf that it was adapted

adapted, in every reſpect, to his deſign, that he had come thither, at a time when the lateneſs of the hour had made him imagine himſelf ſafe from obſervation.—The unexpected ſight of Mary had preſented to his imagination a ſhorter and ſafer way to the completion of his wiſhes; and ſo juſt was he in this calculation, that nothing but the critical arrival of William could have preſerved the peace of poor Mary's mind from being ruined for ever. This intervention had not only ſnatched the prize from his graſp, at the moment when he believed it ſafe beyond the power of fortune, but had blaſted all his hopes for the future, it being now certain that Mary would reſume all her caution, and that the very circumſtance which ſhe conſidered as the moſt unfortunate in her whole life, was that to which ſhe owed her ſafety from an evil, the perpetration of which, had it been delayed a few hours, muſt have been certain.

Raging with his diſappointment, and ſtung beyond all endurance, by the circumſtances that had attended it, Mr. Wynne inſtantly turned his ſteps to Llanbeder Farm, reſolving, if he could not make Humphry Challoner his inſtrument of the vengeance he meditated againſt his ſon, to involve the whole family in the conſequences of his revenge. He was, however, ſpared the additional injuſtice, that would have attached to ſo widely an intended miſchief; for he found, from Humphry, a moſt ready concurrence in all his wiſhes.—It is probable he would have done ſo, had the ſtory been repreſented with a more exact attention to truth, than Mr. Wynne thought neceſſary to give it.

But under the colouring of having accidentally met Mary in the cave, where he aſſerted that no doubt ſhe had an appointment with William, and having allowed himſelf the liberty of ſtruggling a kiſs from her; that he had been aſſailed by William with blows, and the moſt outrageous and indecent language,

language, Humphry could not diſcover any circumſtance that could lead him to think he deviated even from the *tenderneſs* of the parental character, in promiſing his landlord that he would take upon himſelf the puniſhment that ſo much unjuſtified violence and inſolent diſreſpect merited.

Mr. Wynne inſiſted that William ſhould inſtantly be ſent out of the country, and not ſuffered to return till Mary was otherways diſpoſed of; for to allow of their continuing their intercourſe, was, he ſaid, to ſuffer diſobedience and inſolence to triumph; and he ſtrenuouſly declared, that nothing leſs than an eternal bar being put to their union would be accepted by him, in any degree, as a compenſation for the inſults he had received. Upon theſe terms he promiſed not to withdraw his favour from the reſt of the family, nor farther to ſeek to chaſtiſe William, whom otherways he threatened loudly he would not only proſecute, but alſo have

properly

properly corrected by his ſervants. The former part of the threat would he, in no caſe, have put into execution; and the latter, notwithſtanding his promiſe, he ſtill reſerved to himſelf a full right to diſcharge, whenever a proper opportunity might offer.

Any meaſure that would effectually break off all connexion between William and Mary, was too favourable to the views of Humphry, not to meet with a ready acquieſcence from him; and if he heſitated as to ſending William from under his own eye, it was only from a fear, that when at a diſtance, he might find ſome means of becoming independant, and that, by his abſence, all hopes of his cultivating any intimacy with the Fluellin family would be loſt.—But to cultivate an intimacy there to any good effect, Humphry was now convinced it would be firſt neceſſary to diſlodge Mary from his heart, and of this no proſpect appeared, while they had it in their power to be ſo conſtantly together.

Humphry

Humphry had therefore, for theſe reaſons, meditated ſending William away, even before he received Mr. Wynne's complaint, and the circumſtances now appeared too preſſing to ſuffer him to delay doing ſo any longer.

This matter, however, required ſome degree of management; and, above all, it was neceſſary to deceive William as to the reaſons for his being ſent away, and to conceal from him the intended length of his abſence. But as Mr. Wynne was peremptory that he and Mary ſhould meet no more, Humphry was obliged to agree that he ſhould be diſpatched the next morning, and to truſt to ſuch farther contrivances as might ſuggeſt themſelves to him in future, for continuing his abſence, and the placing him in a ſituation from which he could reap no perſonal advantage.

Mr. Wynne, having received the reiterated aſſurances of Humphry, that the morrow's

ſun ſhould ſee William far diſtant from the valley of Llamamon, retired with all that ſatisfaction in his breaſt, which is poſſible to reſult from the ſucceſsful endeavour to blaſt the happineſs of two innocent and unfriended beings, and all that malignant joy which awaits on the gratification of revenge, at once ſecret and ſecure.

While this plot, ſo injurious to the happineſs of the lovers, was going forward, William had conveyed to her humble cottage the weeping Mary.

With indignation, and with bluſhes, Mary had confeſſed to Eleanor the inſults to which ſhe had been expoſed, and William had explained the cauſe of his ſo ſudden and ſo happy appearance at the cave.

" Although Eleanor could not prevail with herſelf to chide Mary for an imprudence for which ſhe had ſuffered ſo ſeverely, ſhe could not conceal the anguiſh with which it

it filled her mind. She ſaw the reputation of her darling at the mercy of the irritated malice of Mr. Wynne; and ſhe ſaw conſequences the moſt alarming, in the vengeance with which ſhe doubted not but that he would purſue William. The more William appeared to brave them, the more ſhe apprehended from them; yet ſhe knew not how to counſel him to ſubmiſſion and forbearance, in a courſe which made reſiſtance honourable, and patience a crime.

"Why," ſaid William, "ſhould the innocent fear the guilty?"

"Becauſe," returned Eleanor, "the guilty will take ſuch methods to ruin the innocent, as the innocent will not make uſe of to defend themſelves."

"Mr. Wynne will not dare to tell ſuch a ſtory to the world," ſaid William.

"But he will tell one much more injurious to the credit of yourſelf and Mary,"

replied Eleanor, "and the world will believe him."

"And I," cried Mary, wringing her hands in an agony; "and I am the cauſe of all this! The loſs of my own reputation, hard as I ſhould find it, I would learn to bear;—but if I drew down ruin upon you———." She ſtopped, unable to finiſh the ſentence.

"I know no ruin but in being ſeparated from you," cried William; "be my wife to-morrow morning; and who ſhall then blame me for the moſt ſtrenuous defence of my wife?"

"No, no," cried Mary; "never will I bring diſgrace and ruin as my portion.

Eleanor interpoſed.—"We need take no haſty meaſures," ſaid ſhe; "let us ſee how Mr. Wynne will act, and then we ſhall be better able to decide what we have to do."

Eleanor then urged William to be gone; and Mary, humbled, depreſſed, and afflicted, felt even his preſence a reſtraint. But William knew not how to quit her; he thought her

her ſafe only when he was by her ſide; and the grief with which ſhe was ſeized had communicated itſelf to his mind.

At length, after reiterated farewells, and aſſurances that he would ſee her early in the morning, he forced himſelf away.—He went not, however, without endeavouring to inſtill into her breaſt hopes which had no place in his own.

"The wiſeſt thing Mr. Wynne can do," ſaid he, "will be to quit the country, and trouble us no more; and is it not probable he may do ſo: Then, my deareſt Mary, good will come out of evil, and all will be well."

With theſe words of comfort, William departed, and Eleanor endeavoured to inſpire the diſconſolate Mary with the hope they ſuggeſted. But Mary was not to be conſoled. The evil that ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe was to be the inſtrument of to William, lay

heavy upon her heart; and ſupperleſs, and with ſwollen eyes, ſhe retired to bed.

William, in the mean time, haſtened home, not doubting but that Mr. Wynne had been there before him, and contriving means, in his own mind, to weather the ſtorm which he had no doubt had been raiſed at Llanbeder; but when he found all calm there, he began to cenceive the warmeſt hopes that Mr. Wynne would indeed rather conſult his reputation than his revenge; and that, however it might be neceſſary to guard againſt his private malice, there would be nothing to apprehend from his open reſentment.

Animated by the thoughts of the conſolation that ſuch conduct, on the part of Mr. Wynne, would bring to his beloved Mary, William heard, with leſs chagrin than he would otherways have done, the neceſſity which his father repreſented to him, of his ſetting out early the next morning for Caernarvonſhire,

narvonſhire, there to tranſact ſome buſineſs with one of their relations, with whom Humphry had very conſiderable dealings.

Humphry repreſented to William, that his abſence could not be long, and thus took from him all reluctance to the journey, and prevented him from conſidering it as important that he ſhould ſee Mary again before he went.

William, therefore, cheerfully prepared to obey his father, and was led to think that his abſence might be no unfortunate circumſtance in the preſent poſture of affairs, as it might tend towards confirming Mr. Wynne in his pacific intentions; and he endeavoured to perſuade himſelf that Mary's watchfulneſs might ſecure her effectually from any further inſult.

William, however, left not Llanbeder before he had found the means to inform Mary where he was gone, and that he ſhould ſpeedily

return: Nor did he fail to comfort her with the probability there appeared that they ſhould hear no more of Mr. Wynne.

This conſolation arrived in good time for poor Mary. Eleanor had ariſen with the ſun, and had haſtened to communicate the untoward events of the preceding evening to Mr. Ellis, and he had been ſo forcibly ſtruck with the probable conſequences to the lovers, that his converſation had ſerved rather to heighten than to abate the apprehenſions of Eleanor.

Mary was ſitting in the depth of obſervation, accuſing herſelf as the moſt imprudent and faulty of her ſex, and racking her brain in vain for expedients by which to avert the evil that threatened William, when his little billet arrived. In the idea of his ſafety, ſhe loſt that of his abſence, and claſping her hands together, "Thank God he is gone!" cried ſhe; and now Mr. Wynne may do his worſt."

Eleanor

Eleanor partook of her pleaſure, and preſently afterwards ſallied forth amongſt her neighbours, to diſcover, if poſſible, how far the adventure of the night before had tranſpired; all was ſilence; and after a few days of ſuſpenſe and anxiety, the fears both of Eleanor and Mary gradually ſubſided, and they became perſuaded that Mr. Wynne was contented to forego a revenge, that could not be proſecuted but at the expence of his reputation.

Nothing, however, could be farther from Mr. Wynne's thoughts than ſuch forbearance.—He had already began the work of vengeance on William, and he continued more reſolved than ever to make himſelf maſter of Mary's fate. He doubted not but that, when ſhe found no immediate effects from his reſentment, and that he no longer appeared in the haunts of Llamamon, ſhe would, in a few days, reſume her uſual habits, and that ſhe could not then fail to fall into his ſnares.

With theſe expectations, he held every thing in perfect readineſs to ſeize her at any moment, when fortune ſhould preſent him with a favourable opportunity, and he kept himſelf in ſo abſolute an obſcurity, that his continuance in the country was not ſuſpected by any one.

When Mary, however, had leiſure to reflect on his ſudden appearance in the cave, at a time when he had taken pains to have it believed that he quitted Merionethſhire, ſhe could not but impute this inconſiſtency between his actions and his profeſſions to ſome deſign in which ſhe was concerned.—Mr. Ellis and Eleanor ſtrengthened theſe ſuſpicions by theirs, and Mary was ſtill farther led to this diſtruſt, by the very circumſtance which Mr. Wynne had hoped would have lulled her into ſecurity.

She was little inclined to give him credit for that ſufficiency of good ſenſe or good temper which would have led him quietly to have

have acquieſced in a chaſtiſement he muſt be ſo conſcious he had thoroughly deſerved ;—and his apparent patience, under the inſult he had received, ſerved but to perſuade her he meditated a more ſecure and effectual vengeance.

Under theſe conſiderations, ſhe again took up the reſolution never to ſtir alone from the cottage.—Such, indeed, was the dread that had ſeized her mind, and ſuch the depreſſion of her ſpirits, occaſioned by all thoſe untoward circumſtances, and by the lengthened abſence of William, that ſhe had no inclination to quit the humble roof, where her daily occupations lay ; nor did ſhe conſider herſelf ſafe an inſtant, when ſhe was not under the eye of Eleanor.

CHAP. XII.

MORE than a month was now elapſed ſince Mary had began to confine herſelf ſo cloſely to the houſe; and no new circumſtance having ariſen to excite her alarm, her diſtruſt and her vigilance were beginning to wear off together. William was not yet returned, nor had ſhe heard a word from him. The hope of gaining ſome intelligence upon a circumſtance ſo important to her, prompted her to ſeek her uſual companions, and, above all, to endeavour to renew her intercourſe with Miſs Challoner. From theſe motives,

motives, ſhe was now again ſometimes ſeen at a diſtance from the cottage; and it ſometimes happened that ſhe was accidentally alone.

Mr. Wynne's ſpies failed not to give him the earlieſt intelligence of theſe circumſtances; and again was the net ſpread, and again was the ſtring ready to be drawn.

Mary had promiſed to meet a friend of her's one morning, at an early hour, at the head of the valley, in order to accompany her on an expedition, in which Miſs Challoner was to be one of the party; and this promiſe had been made in the preſence of one of Mr. Wynne's agents.—Quick intelligence had been conveyed to Mr. Wynne, and he now thought his revenge ſecure beyond the reach of fortune.

Mary had ariſen with the lark, and, with gayer ſpirits than ſhe had lately experienced, ſhe ſallied from her cottage, and took her

ſteps up the valley. She had not yet, however, reached the vicarage, when ſhe was met by a ſervant of Mr. Ellis's, who, breathleſs and terrified, was coming, in all haſte, to ſeek the aſſiſtance and counſel of Eleanor, Mr. Ellis having, the moment before, ſlipped, as he was coming down ſtairs, had fallen, and broke his leg.

Mary forgot, in an inſtant, her engagement, the pleaſure ſhe had propoſed to herſelf, and the news ſhe had hoped to have heard of William; ſhe ran, with the utmoſt ſpeed, to the vicarage, at the ſame time ſending the ſervant to haſten Eleanor to her, and to deſire that Richard would inſtantly ſet out in ſearch of a ſurgeon. The fracture was a bad one, and the conſequences were a fever, which brought Mr. Ellis to the brink of the grave.

Mary never quitted his bedſide during the day, and contended ſtrenuouſly, that ſhe might be allowed to attend him through the night.

night. This being denied her, ſhe, notwithſtanding, eſtabliſhed herſelf in the vicarage, where ſhe ſlept in a little pallet bed in the parlour, that ſhe might be able to attend to every ſound that proceeded from the room above, where Mr. Ellis lay.

More than two months was Mr. Ellis confined to the bed of ſickneſs, during which time Mary never wandered farther from the vicarage than to attend upon her neceſſary duties in the cottage; and Mr. Wynne, informed of theſe circumſtances, and the probability that the cloſeneſs of her attendance upon Mr. Ellis might continue ſtill longer, found his patience exhauſted; and tired of the obſcure and uncomfortable life that he led, he gave over, for this time, his purſuit, and withdrew from Merionethſhire, yet he ſtill thought, at ſome future hour, he might be able to accompliſh that by a *coup de main* which he had not been able to bring about by ſtratagem; and he conſoled himſelf with the thought, that if he could not poſſeſs

Mary

Mary himſelf, he had at leaſt ſucceeded in ſeparating her from William.

This ſeparation Mary now found was not likely to end ſoon.—She had at length heard from William.—He had indeed written to her more than once before, but finding he received no anſwer to his letters, he concluded that his father had found means to intercept them; and therefore, to avoid the like diſappointment this time, he had incloſed his letter to Mr. Ellis.

This letter was dated from Ireland, where he told Mary he had been ſent under pretence of buſineſs of ſome importance, but that he found what he was employed in of ſo frivolous a nature, and there ſeemed ſo little deſire in the people with whom he had to do, to give him ſatisfaction in any reſpect, rather, on the contrary, to render him as uncomfortable as poſſible, at the ſame time that his father found every day freſh reaſon for detaining him at a diſtance, that he could not

not help ſuſpecting there was a deſign in all this; and he even began to diſtruſt that Mr. Wynne was at the bottom of his detention from England.

Theſe ſuſpicions awakened anew all Mary's caution, which the exhortations of Mr. Ellis rendered ſtill more alive.—But he conſoled her under the abſence of William, by repreſenting, that if they were to experience the indignation of Mr. Wynne, it could not be under a more gentle form than this; that William would, in a few months, attain a right to diſpoſe of himſelf; and that, until he had that right, it might be ſafer for them both that they ſhould live aſunder.

Mary's heart offered a gentle remonſtrance againſt this prudential conſideration; but, as ſhe could not put an end to the pains of abſence, ſhe endeavoured to alleviate them, by giving all the weight in her power to the ſuggeſtions of reaſon, and, by the tenderneſs of her letters to William, ſhe took from him every

every pain but that which his diſtance from her inflicted.

In the mean time, ſhe continued, with unremitted ſolicitude, her attentions towards Mr. Ellis.—He was now able to be removed into his ſtudy, and Mary uſed to ſit whole hours by his ſide, either liſtening, with delight to his converſation, or in reading to him, which was an occupation, if poſſible, ſtill more to her liking.

From theſe converſations, and theſe readings, Mary's mind became every day more and more expanded; her reaſonings more juſt, and her ideas more diſtinct and accurate. Her epiſtolary correſpondence with William alſo contributed not a little to the ſame ends.—To him ſhe communicated the ſubject of her lectures with Mr. Ellis, his obſervations upon them, with her own doubts, reaſonings, and opinions.

By

By theſe means, ſhe came to write with eaſe and elegance, and William received from her letters, not only the gratification that attends the communication of mutual and ardent affection, but that pleaſure alſo, ſo ſuited to his mind, which accompanies increaſing information, and the uſe of the underſtanding.

Thus, then, the ſummer wore away, but there appeared no likelihood of the return of William.

Mr. Ellis was now able to move with a ſtick; and ſometimes, with the help of Mary's arm, he would venture beyond the precincts of his own little garden to gain a ſeat, which, in former times, had been a favourite with Mr. Ellis.

Here ſhe had planted a profuſion of roſes and woodbines, and had trained a little arbour of theſe her darling plants into a retreat, well

well ſuited to the conferences of friendſhip, or the whiſpers of love.

It was placed upon a gentle riſing green rock, at the bottom of which was a clear and dimpling brook; and it was ſheltered from every wind, and every intruder, by the high rocks that roſe abruptly on every ſide but one. This ſingle approach was ſo cloſed up by flowering ſhrubs, that it could be penetrated only by one narrow and winding path; yet was this place, apparently ſo ſecluded from the world, ſituated not far from the public road which led paſt the valley of Llamamon, and to which it muſt have been expoſed, had it not been thus carefully guarded. It was poſſible ſtill to catch, thro' the branches of the trees, a tranſitory glimpſe of the objects that, from time to time, paſſed along the road below; and Mary (who had much youthful curioſity to gratify, and whoſe diſpoſition led her to ſociety rather than ſolitude) to facilitate the proſpect, had tied back ſeveral boughs of the trees, and would

would often ſteal her eye from her book, to announce to Mr. Ellis the wonders that appeared upon the highway.

CHAP. XIII.

ONE day, as Mary was placed by the ſide of Mr. Ellis in this retired ſpot, buſily engaged with a page of hiſtory, ſhe happened to raiſe her eyes, with a deſign of ſeeing what was going forward in the preſent world, when being inſtantly ſtruck with glories ſhe had never before ſeen, ſhe exclaimed haſtily, "Look, look, Sir? did you ever ſee ſo beautiful an equipage? So many ſervants? Such

Such gay liveries? Oh! I wiſh they would ſtand ſtill, that I might ſee them plainer."

Obedient, as it were, to her will, the whole cavalcade ſtopped; a conſultation ſeemed to be called, and, to the infinite ſurpriſe both of Mary and Mr. Ellis, they ſaw it quit the public road, and enter a narrow lane, which led only to the valley of Llamamon, and whoſe rugged paths had never before been marked by ſo ſplendid a train.

"What can bring ſuch travellers to the valley of Llamamon?" ſaid Mr. Ellis.

"They muſt be come to ſee you, Sir," ſaid Mary; "ſome of your old friends.—Here is nobody elſe worthy of ſuch viſitors."

"Rather, Mary," returned Mr. Ellis, "there is nobody who would think me worthy of ſuch a viſit. Curioſity, I ſuppoſe, to ſee our rocks and mountains, has brought them."

"Dear Sir," cried Mary, "do you think they will paſs through the valley?"

"They

"They muſt now," ſaid Mr. Ellis, "ſince they will find it difficult to return till they have paſſed beyond the village."

"Then, then, I could ſee them as plain as poſſible, from the little arbour in our garden," ſaid Mary.—"Dear Sir, if you think you could ſit here for a moment by yourſelf, I would be back again before you could count twenty."

"Oh! yes, pray go," ſaid Mr. Ellis, ſmiling; "I ſhall want nothing; and I would not have you avoid ſeeing what you are ſo little likely to ſee again."

Away went Mary like an arrow out of a bow, and arriving almoſt breathleſs at the cottage, received another ſhock of ſurpriſe, by beholding one of the ſmart ſervants, who had ſo engaged her attention, knocking, with the butt end of his whip, at the door. Seeing her, he turned, and addreſſing her with an air of eaſy ſuperiority, "Pray, my pretty dear," ſaid he, "can you tell me whether Mr. and Mrs. Morgan live here?"

Before

Before Mary could anſwer, Eleanor had opened the door, and had replied to his queſtion, that ſhe was Mrs. Morgan, if he had any buſineſs with her.

"My lady, Lady Caroline Seabright, wiſhes to ſee you, Madam," replied he, with great obſequiouſneſs; "ſhe is in her carriage a ſtone's throw off; but is really ſo terrified with theſe monſtrous horrible roads, that ſhe dares come no farther.—Would you have the goodneſs to take the trouble to ſtep to her?"

Mary obſerved Eleanor to turn pale on the mention of Lady Caroline; and the confuſion and diſmay that appeared in her countenance, was now cauſe of aſtoniſhment and wonder to Mary. Lady Caroline's name was familiar to her, and ſhe imagined Eleanor would have been glad to have heard ſhe was alive, and ſo near.

"How happy, my dear mother," ſaid Mary, "that Lady Caroline is come ſafe and

and well to England, after ſo long an abſence."

"Yes, yes," cried Eleanor, endeavouring to recover herſelf, "I hope it is very happy; I will wait upon her immediately; and do you, Mary, gather a few plumbs—perhaps I ſhall be able to prevail on her ladyſhip to reſt herſelf a moment in the cottage."

"It is very kind of Lady Caroline thus to ſeek you out, my dear mother," ſaid Mary, as ſhe turned to do as ſhe was ordered; and Eleanor, collecting all her courage, followed the ſervant to Lady Caroline.

Mary, as ſhe was gathering the plumbs, recollected the ſituation in which ſhe had left Mr. Ellis; and as there was no conſideration upon earth to which ſhe would ſacrifice his convenience, ſhe ſet down her baſket, and run haſtily to the place where he was fitting.

"Who would have thought it, my dear Sir," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe approached, "that

coach belongs to Lady Caroline Seabright, my mother's old friend you know, and my mother thought ſhe was dead; but ſhe is alive, and come down here into Wales to ſeek after my mother, which is ſo kind of her; and I muſt run and gather her ſome plumbs, and do all I can to oblige her; but I am come firſt to take care of you home;—or if you like to ſtay longer where you are, I will come again preſently."

"I am extremely glad to hear what you tell me," ſaid Mr. Ellis; "your mother will be made quite happy; give me your arm, and I will hobble home as faſt as I can, that you may go and do your part towards waiting upon Lady Caroline."

Mr. Ellis, reſting upon Mary's arm, made the beſt of his way to the vicarage; and ſhe prattled all the way of Lady Caroline's goodneſs, and the pleaſure ſhe was ſure her mother would feel.—"Although, do you know," ſaid ſhe, "the ſurpriſe, at firſt, made her look as if ſhe were quite ſorry."

Mary

Mary having lodged Mr. Ellis in his own parlour, made the beſt of her way towards the cottage, gathered the plumbs, and turned, with a light ſtep, towards the houſe, impatient to ſhew her attention and gratitude towards the patroneſs of her mother.

As ſhe entered the door, ſhe heard ſomebody exclaim, "Where can ſhe be gone? I long to embrace her."

"Mary," cried Eleanor, in a tremulous voice; "Mary, is it you? Come hither;—come to Lady Caroline; kneel to her;—don't be ſurpriſed;—don't be alarmed;—ſhe is—ſhe is indeed your—mother."

"Mother!" ſaid Mary, recoiling from the outſtretched arms of Lady Caroline,—"mother!" repeated ſhe, and ſunk ſenſeleſs on the ground.

"Sure this is joy," ſaid Lady Caroline; while Eleanor, alarmed with an emotion ſo unexpected, and ſo unuſual in Mary, was buſied in endeavouring to recall her ſenſes,

careleſs from what cauſe her diſorder had ariſen.

Mary, opening her eyes, caſt them, for a moment, upon Lady Caroline; then clinging round Eleanor, "Oh! my mother! my dear mother!" cried ſhe; "are you indeed not my mother?"

"My dear Mary," ſaid Eleanor, "a happier fate awaits you; ſee there a better mother."

"A better! ah! that cannot be."

"At leaſt," ſaid Lady Caroline, with ſomething of pique in her voice, "at leaſt I will hope I ſhall be as good.—My power to be ſo will be much greater; look at me, Mary; you do not know how much I will love you."

"Not more," ſaid Eleanor, "I will engage for it, Madam, than Miſs Seabright will love you.—You may judge, by her affection for thoſe who are not her parents, how ſhe will love thoſe who are."

"You

"You muſt love me too," ſaid a gentleman, who was preſent, but who had not yet ſpoken, "you muſt love your father."

Mary raiſed her eyes languidly towards him, and held out her hand; he claſped his arms round her.

"You are as beautiful as a little angel, my love," ſaid he; "and you cannot gueſs how we ſhall dote upon you, nor how happy you will be."

"Yes," ſaid Lady Caroline, embracing her, "when you have a little recovered your ſurpriſe, you will find yourſelf the happieſt creature in the world, and our love to you ſhall know no bounds."

"And will you love William too?" ſaid Mary.

"William! William!" cried Lady Caroline:—"Good God! what do I hear?—Who is ſhe talking of?"

"Had not Miſs Seabright better take a little time to recollect herſelf, Madam?"

ſaid Eleanor; "ſhe can hardly, at preſent, believe what ſhe ſees and hears; her ſenſes muſt be quite bewildered.—If you will give her leave, ſhe will go a little into the air;—and when ſhe has recovered her ſurpriſe, ſhe will be able to underſtand the happy change in her fortune."

"Very true, that will be beſt," ſaid Lady Caroline; "but my dear Mary, do you know who are talking with you? That is Sir James Seabright; he is your father;—I am Lady Caroline Seabright; I am your mother; the Earl of L—— was your grandfather; I hope we ſhall find you worthy of ſuch a deſcent.—I was obliged to leave you when an infant, under the care of this good Eleanor, and accompany your father to India; for he was not a Baronet then, nor rich; but now he is both the one and the other, and you are our only child.—Alas! we have loſt two boys; and now we are come to ſettle in England, we were reſolved to ſeek you out, and make you rich and happy; and I am only afraid your little brain

brain will be turned with ſuch wonderful good fortune."

"Well, Lady Caroline," ſaid Sir James, obſerving that Mary liſtened to this harangue with her eyes fixed on the ground, and in perfect ſilence, "another time will do better for all theſe things; ſhe will underſtand them better preſently; and now, I am ſure, ſhe wiſhes to have leiſure to recover herſelf, and collect her ſcattered ſenſes.—Go, my love, go into the air a little."

"Yes, go," ſaid Lady Caroline, "walk towards the carriage; you will ſee it is very beautiful; you can never have ſeen ſuch a thing before, and now it is your own; ſo go and look at it; it will amuſe you."

Mary withdrew; but ſhe went no farther than the door, where dropping upon a bench that was placed againſt the houſe, ſhe remained with her head reſted upon her hands, the tears gently following each other, unheeded, down her cheek, while the confuſion of her mind, and the oppreſſion of her heart,

was ſo great, that ſhe could ſcarcely either breathe or think.

Eleanor had propoſed Mary's withdrawing, not more as a relief to her, than to gain an opportunity of explaining herſelf fully to Lady Caroline and Sir James, who, on their part, were equally eager to be informed who this William was, who ſeemed to be ſo near the heart of their daughter.

Eleanor left no particular relative to their connexion untold, and repreſented the difficulties ſhe had herſelf lain under, as to what part ſhe ought to have taken in the affair.

"You ought to have ſtrangled her, rather than have ſuffered her to have formed ſuch a connexion," ſaid Lady Caroline, paſſionately; "if you had told her ſhe was our daughter, ſhe would have diſdained the plebeian fellow."

"But,"

"But," returned Eleanor, "I had your ladyſhip's expreſs orders *not* to tell her ſhe was your daughter.—I was to bring her up as my own; and if I did not hear from your ladyſhip, I was to teach her to milk the goats, and to look after the ſheep, and ſuch arts, and fifty pounds was to be the whole of her portion. In theſe circumſtances, I ſhould have thought myſelf happy to have ſeen her the wife of William Challoner; and as I never heard a word from your ladyſhip, not even once to inquire after the poor baby, what could I think but that you were dead? And then to have told her who were her real parents, would only have been to fill her mind with regrets, and ſpoil the ſimple happineſs which otherways ſhe might know in her humble ſphere."

"I could not let you hear from me," ſaid Lady Caroline, peeviſhly; "matters did not go well at firſt; and always the expences were great; and we had ſons. In ſhort, I could not let you hear from me, that was out of the queſtion; but you ought to have

had ſome regard for the honour of our family, from whom you had received ſo many obligations."

"In taking all the care I could of your child," replied Eleanor, modeſtly, "I thought I beſt ſhewed the ſenſe I had of theſe obligations."

"This is all to no purpoſe," interrupted Sir James; "perhaps Eleanor might have judged this matter better; but we ought rather to thank her for what ſhe has done, than reproach her for what ſhe has omitted to do. What is now to be thought of, are the methods we muſt take to remedy the miſchief, as to this perſon."

"Name him not," ſaid Lady Caroline;—"I would rather ſhe was dead, than that ſhe ſhould, for a moment, now ſhe knows who ſhe is, entertain ſo low-lived a paſſion."

"You have little reaſon to fear that ſhe will do ſo," returned Sir James; "it cannot be, but that the good company we ſhall introduce her to will put all ſuch ſtrange thoughts out of her head. I never ſaw any thing

thing more pretty than ſhe is; and her beauty, and the fortune ſhe muſt have, will draw twenty men around her the firſt hour ſhe is ſeen; any one of whom will drive this clown out of her mind."

"Yes, ſhe is very pretty, indeed," ſaid Lady Caroline; "don't you think ſhe is very like me, Sir James? And do you know (added ſhe, turning fiercely to Eleanor) that Miſs Seabright will have an hundred thouſand pounds for her fortune; and what a prepoſterous idea it would be to name this farmer fellow more, deſcended as ſhe is, if ſhe were not to have a farthing.—But you talk, Sir James, of the firſt hour ſhe ſhall be ſeen.—To be ſure I ſhall not be able to bring her out this winter; ſhe muſt have a thouſand ſtrange ways, and awkward tricks, that will make me die with confuſion. I dare ſay it will take me ſix months to modulate the tone of her voice."

"I thought the tone of her voice, in the few words ſhe uttered, one of the ſweeteſt I ever heard," returned Sir James; "and

there is a native eaſe and elegance about her that is quite enchanting.—Any body (added he, complimenting himſelf) may ſee that ſhe is well born; this young farmer had no bad taſte, I can tell you; but had ſhe a thouſand awkward ways, her beauty, her rank, and her fortune, would draw a veil over them all. I have no fear but that ſhe will be eagerly ſought, nor no apprehenſion but that ſhe will ſoon be ſenſible of the advantages that attend the change in her ſituation. Eleanor, however, will beſt inſtruct us how to work upon her diſpoſition."

"That, I fear, will be difficult," returned Lady Caroline; "ſhe ſeems to be a creature without affections; it appeared to me that ſhe did not care a farthing for us.—I am afraid ſhe has no heart."

"Ah! Madam," cried Eleanor, "how much are you miſtaken.—Miſs Seabright has the warmeſt and moſt affectionate of hearts.—No one is more ſenſible of kindneſs. But you muſt forgive her, if your ladyſhip

and

and Sir James, appearing to her as ſtrangers, ſhe felt for you as if you were only ſo."

"Strangers!" repeated Lady Caroline;—"I ſhould have thought the force of blood to her own father and mother would have been ſufficient to have awakened her affection; but ſhe ſeemed to wiſh to conſider you only as her mother, and not to be in the leaſt pleaſed when ſhe found ſhe was ſo much better born."

"Your ladyſhip muſt endeavour to overlook all this," ſaid Eleanor; "Miſs Seabright is not properly appriſed of the advantages attendant upon high birth; advantages to which ſhe could not conceive ſhe had any claim.—It has been the ſtudy of my life to render her happy, and ſhe has repaid my endeavours by the warmeſt affection, and moſt implicit obedience."

"All which, no doubt, ſhe will transfer to us," ſaid Sir James: "But how would you adviſe us to treat her?"

"With the greateſt tenderneſs," replied Eleanor, "if I may be permitted to ſpeak freely;

freely; ſhe has never been uſed otherways; kindneſs will do every thing with her;—I much doubt if force will do any thing."

"There again, how ſtrangely you have brought her up!" ſaid Lady Caroline;—"how ſtrangely have I been miſtaken in you, Eleanor; I thought you would have taught her her duty to her parents, and bowed her will to your's.—There is no good education without a little wholeſome diſcipline. It teaches children to know themſelves; and if you had uſed it towards Mary, ſhe would have been glad enough to have heard you were not her mother."

"Your ladyſhip has altered your notions concerning education, ſince you uſed to complain of the ſeverities of Madame Beaumont," ſaid Eleanor.

"Oh! I did not know what I would be at then," ſaid Lady Caroline; "now I ſee, that if any thing, Madame Beaumont was only too indulgent. If I had been kept under proper ſubjection, I ſhould never have run away with Sir James; and with ſuch an example

example before your eyes, who would have thought you would have ſuffered Mary to have run riot."

"Again," ſaid Sir James, "I ſay all this is to no purpoſe.—Do you think, Eleanor, if we treat Mary with kindneſs, and promiſe her all manner of indulgence, we ſhall be able to make her love us, and forget this William? We have no ſon now; ſhe is the hopes of my family; I hope to marry her to a nobleman of the firſt conſideration, and it would break my heart to be diſappointed."

"I have no doubt," replied Eleanor;—"but that kindneſs will, with Miſs Seabright, produce affection; and that there is nothing ſhe will not ſacrifice to oblige parents whom ſhe loves, and who ſhe thinks worthy of her love."

"Worthy of her love!" ſaid Lady Caroline; "pray is ſhe to be judge of that? Or is it likely that we ſhould *not* be worthy of her love?"

"I ſhould be very ſorry to think ſo," replied Eleanor; "but if I may venture to ſpeak,

ſpeak, Miſs Seabright, for her years, is a very good judge of the characters of people; and I never ſaw her love any body whom ſhe did not believe worthy."

"Well, well, we *will* be worthy," ſaid Sir James; "and I have to beg of you, Lady Caroline, that you will attend to what Eleanor ſays, and try every gentle means to win her affections.—We muſt not expect ſhe will love us at firſt ſight; we muſt coax her, and endeavour to give her a taſte for all the fine things ſhe will ſee and hear of, and then all we wiſh will follow of courſe.—Now promiſe me, Lady Caroline, that you will be kind and gentle with her."

"You ſpeak as if I were a very fury, Sir James," returned Lady Caroline.—"If *you* know how to rein in your temper, I am ſure I ſhall be able to manage *mine*: But then ſhe muſt not talk about this William. I ſhall be ready to beat her, if ſhe names him."

"At preſent you muſt ſhew no ſuch inclination," ſaid Sir James; "we muſt even leave her ſome hopes that we may be brought

brought over to her way of thinking; and ſo, by little and little, as ſhe loſes her inclination for the fellow, we may diſcloſe our real deſigns." Hey, Eleanor! don't you think this will do?"

"Violent oppoſition will *not* do," ſaid Eleanor: and nobody can tell what effect the new way of life Miſs Seabright will lead, and the different company ſhe will keep, may have upon her."

"She ſhall be no daughter of mine," ſaid Lady Caroline, "if ſhe does not abjure ſo plebeian an inclination in a month.—But Sir James, let us ſeek her, and let us carry her away directly.—I tremble every minute that ſhe continues to breathe this vulgar air."

"Carry her away directly!" ſaid Eleanor; "ſurely your ladyſhip will not be gone to-night; you muſt pardon me; but I love her as if indeed ſhe were my child; my huſband loves her equally;—he is now from home;—if he returns, and finds this darling gone (pray forgive me, Madam) gone for ever, I think it will break his heart; and

Mary—

Mary--Miſs Seabright, I mean, will herſelf be very ſorry, I think, to go ſo ſuddenly."

"It is beſt, notwithſtanding, for us to be gone directly," ſaid Sir James, interrupting ſomething that Lady Caroline was going to ſay with vehemence; "but, my good Eleanor, you muſt not think you have loſt your little Mary for ever: No, no, ſhe ought always to think of you as a mother; and you and honeſt Richard muſt come and ſee her in town.—Nobody will ever be more welcome gueſts at my houſe."

Poor Eleanor now burſt into tears, and ſaid, "I thank you, Sir; but alas! I ſhall ſee my dear Mary no more, when once ſhe is gone from Llamamon.—We are got old now, and ſhall never travel to London; nor ſhall I ever again ſee ſuch happy days as I have ſpent in the company of that dear child."

"Oh! fie, fie, Eleanor," ſaid Lady Caroline, who ſeemed now to have taken her part; "you muſt not ſo deſpond; you will live to nurſe Mary's children, I have no doubt.

doubt.—You muſt, as Sir James ſays, come and ſee us in town; and as to going away directly, your good ſenſe will ſhew you that it it neceſſary, and I hope you will not ſet Mary the example of unwillingneſs."

"There is one perſon, however, Madam," ſaid Eleanor, "that I hope your ladyſhip will allow her to ſee before ſhe goes.—This is the clergyman of the place.—I cannot expreſs what ſhe owes to him, nor what an affection there is between them."

"An affection!" ſaid Lady Caroline.

"Ah! Madam, you need not be alarmed here," ſaid Eleanor; "Mr. Ellis is near ſeventy; he loves Miſs Seabright as if ſhe were his child; and I will ſay has taken the ſame pains with her as if ſhe had been ſo."

"Well, then, let him come here, and take leave of her," ſaid Lady Caroline;—"and pray ſend to him immediately, for we have no time to loſe."

"He cannot ſtir from home, Madam," ſaid Eleanor; "he is ſcarcely recovered from

a dangerous illneſs, and is ſo lame, that he can ſcarcely walk."

"Oh! then you muſt tell him all about this matter," replied Lady Caroline; for really ſhe cannot go to him."

"No, no, that's impoſſible," ſaid Sir James; "and now let us ſeek Mary, and be gone."

"It is ſcarcely a ſtep to the vicarage," cried Eleanor.

"If it were only *half* a ſtep," ſaid Lady Caroline, haughtily, "Mary could not go; no need of more blubbering, and leave-taking, than can be helped."

"Well, but Lady Caroline," ſaid Sir James, "ſuppoſe, as Eleanor ſays, the gentleman has been ſo kind to Mary, I ſtep, and acknowledge his civilities, and apologize for her not waiting upon him; and, in the mean time, you may prepare Mary, to be ready to accompany us."

"Do as you pleaſe," returned Lady Caroline; "but it ſeems to me to be an unneceſſary trouble; all this loving other people's children

children as if they were our own, is nonſenſe. Come, where is Mary? I told her to go towards the carriage."

"Well, but Eleanor," ſaid Sir James, "we do not mean to run away without ſhewing a little the ſenſe we have of your care of our child; although it is quite out of our power to repay you as you deſerve.—Pray take that; and remember, the ſooner you and honeſt Richard viſit us the better."

Eleanor involuntarily drew back.

"No, Sir, no," ſaid ſhe; "I want no pay for what has been the greateſt pleaſure of my life; and now Richard and I, alas! have only ourſelves to think of, we ſhall be far richer than we deſire."

"Oh! but you muſt oblige me," cried Sir James; "you cannot think how it grieves me to ſee you in ſuch a poor place, nor what an affliction it was to Lady Caroline and myſelf, to hear of your misfortunes when we ſought you in vain in Montgomeryſhire;

ſhire; but this, perhaps, will ſet all to rights; and when you come to ſee us in town, you ſhall tell us all your ſtory, which I quite long to hear; though now we have not time to liſten to it."

"Pray excuſe me, Sir," ſaid Eleanor earneſtly, and feeling ſomething of indignation riſe in her mind, which ſhe could not account for; "we never thought ourſelves unfortunate; and this place has always appeared a palace to us; and indeed, Sir, it is not in your power to give us *that*, now we muſt loſe our dear child, that can make us happy; nor while we had her, could all the wealth of India have made us happier than we were."

"You muſt not go on in this diſmal ſtrain," ſaid Sir James; "nor can you wonder that we are impatient to poſſeſs a treaſure which is our own, and which you prize ſo highly."

"No, certainly," replied Eleanor; "and moſt cheerfully would I have yielded her, if a little more time had been granted to her, and to me; but ſo ſuddenly to ſnatch her away,

away, before my huſband returns—without ſuffering her to ſee Mr. Ellis—it is all this that quite overcomes me."

"I am very ſorry for all theſe things," ſaid Sir James; "but it is quite impoſſible to be otherways: And what ſhould hinder you coming to ſee her in town? Pray give this to Mr. Morgan, as a teſtimony of my regard for him."

"No, Sir, no," cried Eleanor warmly;—"I cannot, I muſt not; my huſband would never forgive me, if I did."

And ſo ſaying, ſhe followed Lady Caroline out, who had gone, during the foregoing dialogue, to ſeek for Mary.—She found her, immoveable, upon the bench where ſhe had firſt thrown herſelf, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and ſwimming in tears.

"My dear child," ſaid Lady Caroline, "look at me; tell me you will try to love me."

Mary

Mary took her hand and kiſſed it.—"I ſhall be very happy to love you, Madam," ſaid ſhe.

"You *will* be very happy, my dear; you cannot gueſs how happy you will be," ſaid Lady Caroline, "nor what fine clothes you ſhall have, nor how many ſervants to wait upon you; and whenever you ſtir, you ſhall be carried in a coach or a chair, and you will only be carried from one fine place to another. Such a ſucceſſion of delights will be yours, that you will hardly believe your ſenſes; I doubt not but you will then forget Llamamon."

Mary withdrew her hand from Lady Caroline, and throwing her arms round Eleanor's neck, burſt afreſh into tears.

"I will never forget Llamamon," ſaid ſhe; "and I will call you my dear mother, tho' you call me Miſs Seabright, and will not own me for Mary."

Poor

Poor Eleanor could not ſpeak, but wept bitterly, as ſhe preſſed Mary to her boſom.

"Well, my dear Mary," ſaid Lady Caroline, "this is very amiable of you, and Eleanor ſhall come and ſee you very ſoon; but now we muſt be gone, and ſo my dear bid her farewell."

"Be gone!" ſaid Mary; "oh! no, I will not go; I will not go till I have ſeen William, and told him I will never forget him."

Lady Caroline bit her lips, and evidently did herſelf violence, in reſtraining her paſſion. Sir James, however, who was a much better diſſembler, interpoſed; he ſaid every thing that was ſoothing, kind, and flattering, to Mary.—He even inſinuated, that to ſee William in town would be more agreeable, than to wait for him here; and he urged her, in the kindeſt manner, to depart. All, however, was in vain.

"I cannot, I will not go," ſaid ſhe.—"If I go without ſeeing, or writing to William, he may think I intend to forget him; and if I were to do ſo, I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful creature in the world; my dear mother can tell you how he loved me when I was poor, and he rich, compared to me;—and ſhall I not love him when I am rich, and he poor?"

Lady Caroline turned away.

"Who forbids you, my dear, to love him?" ſaid Sir James; "we only deſire that you will go with us, that you may be as happy as a princeſs, and poſſeſs every thing that you can deſire."

"I cannot go, indeed I cannot.—Muſt I not ſee my dear father? Muſt I not ſee Mr. Ellis, and my dear mother?" cried ſhe, throwing herſelf into Eleanor's arms; "I never, never can part with you."

"But Mary," ſaid Sir James, "be a little reaſonable.—The moſt urgent buſineſs can

ries me away directly; ſure you do not love us ſo little, who love you ſo much, that you would have us leave you? You are our only delight; our ſtudy ſhall be to give you all you wiſh.—Eleanor and Richard ſhall come and ſee you; you ſhall viſit Llamamon again; and will it not be better to rejoice Mr. Ellis with your joy, when you tell him of your happineſs, than to go to him now, whom you would only overwhelm with your ſorrow?"

"But may I write to William? May I invite him to viſit me?"

"You ſhall not aſk any thing that we will not grant," ſaid Sir James; "and now, my dear, bid Eleanor farewell."

"I cannot, indeed I cannot; if I would go, I cannot.—I cannot walk, I cannot move."

Sir James, ſeeing one of his ſervants at the little garden gate, beckened him to him.

"I do not wonder, my love," ſaid he, putting his arms round her, "that you are unable to walk; your joy and ſurpriſe have quite overcome you; but George and I will carry you between us to the carriage."

At the ſame moment, raiſing her from the ground, with the aſſiſtance of the ſervant, they lifted her up gently between them, and carried her off;—the ſuddeneſs of the action, and her extreme grief, taking away all power of reſiſtance, and even of ſpeech.

Eleanor followed her, weeping; but encouraging her with the aſſurance that ſhe was going to be very happy.

Sir James put her into the coach, but the next moment ſhe gave a ſudden ſpring, and was about to have thrown herſelf out, that ſhe might once more embrace Eleanor.

La

Lady Caroline got in haſtily, and throwing her arms round her, called her "her angel,"—"her love,"—"her beauty," and reiterated her promiſes of fine clothes, fine houſes, and fine equipages, while Sir James talked of nothing but unlimited indulgence and unbounded affection; and the poor victim, thus overcome, and all reſiſtance rendered vain, the coach drove off.

CHAP. XIV.

BEHOLD, then, the rich and exalted Mary, conſidering herſelf as the moſt unfortunate of her ſex; ſee her wildly gazing on each well known object with all that poignancy of deſpair which attacks a youthful boſom, when firſt thwarted in its favourite wiſh.

"Never—oh! never ſhall I ſee you more!" were the only words that her oppreſſed heart would ſuffer her to utter.

So

So did the unfortunate Mary Stewart gaze on the beloved ſhore of France, when ſhe had deſcended from a throne, while ſhe was wafted to that kingdom where ſhe was deſtined to aſcend one.—But *her* ſorrows knew no mitigation; while her leſs ill-ſtarred nameſake, ſinking, by degrees, into a milder grief, began to liſten, with overflowing eyes, it is true, but with a little ſpark of hope re-kindling in her heart, to the copious expreſſions of parental love, which flowed from the lips of Sir James and Lady Caroline.

She began gently to return the preſſure of their hands; and at length, throwing her arms round Lady Caroline's neck, declared ſhe would love her as well as ſhe did her "dear Eleanor—her firſt, her ever-beloved mother."

Lady Caroline returned her embrace, and ſaid, "you will ſoon ſee the difference between what I will do for you, and what it was in the power of poor Eleanor to beſtow."

"Oh!" returned Mary, "ſhe could love me with all her heart and ſoul; and ſo it was ſhe did love me.—If you, Madam, love me ſo, I ſhall have nothing more to aſk for."

"I will love you a thouſand times better," cried Lady Caroline; "nothing that you deſire but you ſhall have it."

In this promiſe, the ſanguine heart of Mary included, indeed, all that it deſired; ſhe recovered her cheerfulneſs; ſhe talked of the dear friends ſhe had left behind; ſhe paſſed, in idea, the weeks that were to ſeparate them, and ſhe drew from Sir James and Lady Caroline, who thought only of the preſent moment, a promiſe, again and again repeated, that Richard and Eleanor ſhould ſoon viſit her, and that ſhe alſo ſhould ſpeedily reviſit Llamamon.

All who have been young know how ſwift hope ſprings from the ruins of deſpair. There was nothing that Mary wiſhed, of which ſhe did not already believe herſelf poſſeſſed.

Her

Her generous heart expanded with the thoughts that *ſhe* ſhould be *now* the benefactreſs of *William*; that ſhe ſhould be able to overcome the ill-will of his family, by acts of kindneſs, and win them to love her, by ſhewing them that ſhe was worthy of their love.

Perhaps, alſo, a little pride mingled itſelf with her generoſity, when ſhe thought that ſhe, who had ſo lately been deſpiſed, would now be looked up to with apprehenſion and deſire.—Her vivid imagination erected, in a moment, a flowery retreat, wherein, cloſe to her own dwelling, ſhe meditated to nurſe the declining years of Richard and Eleanor; ſhe thought ſhe might poſſibly be able to wean even the dear Mr. Ellis from his beloved vicarage; and ſhe reſolved to leave no art untried to accompliſh it.

Her happy ignorance of the world, of its uſages, and its vices, concealed from her view the difficulty, and even, perhaps, the im-

practicability of her ſcheme.—Her happineſs ſhe believed to reſt wholly on the will of her new found parents; and at this moment ſhe entertained not a doubt but that they would go before hand with her wiſhes.

Theſe cogitations added brilliancy to her eyes, and animation to her air.—Her gaiety ſeemed to delight both Sir James and Lady Caroline; and the obſervation that it did ſo, rendered her ſtill more gay. If the oppreſſion that ſtill lay at her heart drew from her every now and then a deep ſigh, it was involuntary; and ſhe aſſured her new friends that ſhe ſhould ſoon get the better of this mark of ſorrow; that her reaſon did not acknowledge any juſt cauſe for it; that ſhe thought herſelf happy, and was ſure ſhe ſhould love them extremely. In return, they loaded her with praiſes; talked of her beauty; of the ſweetneſs of her voice; and reiterated, again and again, their profeſſions of love and indulgence.—One thing, however, ſhe ſtill thought unkind.

"Why

"Why could not we," ſaid ſhe, "ſtay a few hours longer at dear Llamamon? If I could not have waited till we had ſent for William, I might at leaſt have ſeen Mr. Ellis and my dear father; and I could have written to William, to have aſſured him I ſhould always be the ſame to him."

Lady Caroline frowned, and was about to ſpeak, but Sir James interrupting her, and continuing his blandiſhments, ſaid, "My dear Mary, the thing was impoſſible.—I have the moſt indiſpenſable buſineſs that calls me away.—We have not been in England many weeks; our impatience to find you made every other conſideration give way;—but I cannot be abſent from my people any longer; and you would not wiſh to inconvenience me; I am ſure your good ſenſe, and your kind heart, would equally revolt from ſuch a wiſh."

Mary was ſatisfied;—no one half ſo perſuadable, when ſhe believed ſhe was yielding to her friends.

"No, no," cried ſhe, "you ſhall not ſuffer any evil for my ſake;—nothing would make me ſo unhappy."

Sir James embraced her; and Mary, giving full credence to all this ſhew of affection, yielded up her mind to the moſt delicious reflections;—but ſhort-lived was this dream of happineſs.—That very night ſhe was awakened to a ſenſe of her true ſituation;—nor did the maternal cares of Lady Caroline ever ſuffer her to ſlumber more.

The agitation her mind had undergone, through the day, added to the exerciſe of the carriage, to which ſhe was unaccuſtomed, had entirely fatigued her, and, at her own requeſt, on their arrival at the inn where it was propoſed they ſhould paſs the night, ſhe retired almoſt immediately to bed.

Her

Her bed-chamber was ſituated through the dining room, where Sir James and Lady Caroline were to ſup. Lady Caroline had attended her while ſhe was undreſſing; had loaded her with careſſes, and had left her with a heart overflowing with gratitude and love to her new found parents.

But Mary, although fatigued, could not ſleep. The train of new reflections, which the adventures of the day had introduced into her mind; the thoughts of William, with the apprehenſions how he might regard the change in her ſituation, kept her awake and reſtleſs. In vain ſhe threw herſelf from one ſide to the other of the bed; ſhe could find repoſe in none; and wondered why ſhe, who had never before known what it was to be ſleepleſs, ſhould experience it now, for the firſt time, when ſhe was told ſhe was ſo much happier than ſhe had ever before been.

At length ſhe ſeemed ready to fall into a doſe, when her own name, pronounced by Sir James with earneſtneſs, arreſted her attention.—She liſtened; perhaps in the fond expectation of hearing how much ſhe was beloved, or vainly hoping an enumeration of her ſo much talked of beauties and merits.

"It is the ſimpleſt little dupe I ever met with," ſaid Sir James; "how implicitly ſhe credits all we ſay, and how faithfully ſhe believes we will ſuffer her to marry that clown.—Her ignorance is quite diverting."

"Name him not," ſaid Lady Caroline; "my blood boils with the ſuppoſition; and but that I ſee it will be eaſy to dazzle her with our kindneſs, and that may bend her to our will, I could not endure that ſhe ſhould continue with me a moment."

"Kindneſs will do every thing with her, I ſee that," returned Sir James; "and ſo, by degrees, we ſhall learn her to forget her dear Llamamon; but were we to be harſh with her, I verily believe ſhe would run away from

from us in ſpite of all the fine things we could offer her."

"She will learn to know their value, ſoon," ſaid Lady Caroline; "but what an infinity of trouble ſhall I have before I can poliſh her? I quite ſhrink from the Herculean labour; and then what methods can be taken with a girl of eighteen? If ſhe were only nine or ten, I could ſoon have her at a word. I remember Madame de Beaumont and her ways. I durſt as ſoon have eat my finger ends, as have contradicted her.—She and Lady L—— were always of a mind; and if my dancing-maſter complained of me, or I neglected my leſſons, or committed any awkward trick, the rod was the reſource; and even the tales of my nurſery maid were liſtened to.—She could get me a whipping at any time; and I have no doubt but I could find as watchful and ſkilful people now, if Mary were of an age to be under ſuch diſcipline."

"It is nothing but kindneſs, and gentle treatment will do," returned Sir James;—

"and

"and again I entreat that you will reſtrain your temper; and ſhe is really ſo pretty, and has ſuch a natural elegance about her, that I do not apprehend your taſk will be a very difficult one.—Let us ſooth, flatter her, and dazzle her; and take my word for it, ſhe will ſoon forget this farmer fellow, and we ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing her the wife of ſome diſtinguiſhed nobleman."

"Would to Heaven ſhe had been a boy," ſaid Lady Caroline, with a deep drawn ſigh; "how unfortunate we were to loſe two boys, and ſo to find it neceſſary to ſeek out this girl, or to ſee our property go to people we care not for; and as it is, your title, and the Seabright eſtate will be loſt."

"I ſhould have been glad, it is true, to have ſeen them both united in a *ſon* of my own," ſaid Sir James; "but they will not be loſt; my nephew will poſſeſs them both, thanks to the wiſdom of our laws, which thus ſecures the perpetuation of ancient families. I ſhould be ſorry to ſee them decided, even in favour of a *daughter* of my own."

"But

"But if ſhe could have tranſmitted the title with the eſtate," ſaid Lady Caroline, "don't you think ſomething more might have been ſaid in favour of the *wiſdom* of the law?"

"No," ſaid Sir James, warmly; "they ought to be in the male line; it is the voice of God, and the voice of nature, that they ought———."

"You are always againſt the women, Sir James."

"I am on the ſide of reaſon and of juſtice; and if theſe are againſt the women, that is not my fault."

Lady Caroline replied, and Sir James rejoined;—and poor Mary, who had loſt not a word of the foregoing diſcourſe, now found herſelf bewildered in a diſpute, of which ſhe could underſtand nothing but the paſſion and ill-humour with which it was carried on.

At firſt ſhe had been tempted to ſpring out of bed, and enter her proteſt againſt all the

the projected ſchemes of poliſhing and forgetfulneſs, but a little reflection had occaſioned her to be ſtill; and the cruel diſappointment this converſation was to her hopes, the reſentment with which it filled her mind, and the indignation ſhe felt on having been deceived, all vented themſelves in floods of tears, until at length ſhe cried herſelf to ſleep.

When ſhe appeared the next morning, both Sir James and Lady Caroline were ſtruck with the alteration that had taken place in her manners.—With a look of cold incredulity, ſhe received all their blandiſhments, and liſtened, with an air of melancholy deſpondence, to their highly coloured pictures of the felicity that awaited her, and the indulgence they had promiſed her.

Unconſcious of the cauſe from which this change aroſe, they imputed it wholly to the deep-rooted love ſhe had taken for all at Llamamon; and they redoubled their efforts of kindneſs, to ſupplant, by new affections, ſuch

ſuch old ones as they were determined to eradicate.

The variety of the objects on the road, in ſpite of herſelf, awakened anew the vivacity of Mary.—Sometimes, too, ſhe almoſt perſuaded herſelf that her very ſenſes had deceived her, and that a tenderneſs ſo warmly expreſſed could not be wholly without foundation.—Then it was that ſhe replied to it, with ſomething of an anſwering regard; and Sir James and Lady Caroline began again to flatter themſelves they gained ground.

CHAP. XV.

THE third day brought them to an elegant manſion, that Sir James had hired in Bedfordſhire.—The family ſeat of the Seabrights was in a diſtant county, and had no attractions for its preſent poſſeſſors. The ſeaſon of the year had hitherto prevented them from accommodating themſelves with a houſe in town; but it was now reſolved to provide one immediately, that the work of Mary's *education* might be began without delay.

Mary

Mary was no ſooner arrived at her journey's end, than, in her eagerneſs for ſome communication with William, ſhe ſat down to write to him.—She troubled herſelf little with reflecting upon the reſiſtance ſhe might probably meet with.—Not a ſhadow of doubt ever croſſed her mind as to her finally maintaining her intercourſe with him; and, in the diſpoſition ſhe was now, towards her new found parents, ſhe did not feel inclined to treat them with much homage.

Her attempts to write to William was therefore open and undiſguiſed; and the conſequence was, that Lady Caroline took the paper from her.—Mary expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe, and reminded Lady Caroline of the unbounded indulgence ſhe had promiſed her. But Lady Caroline, without attending to the ſtrength of her plea, contented herſelf with repreſenting, that, for a young woman to write to a young man, was ſuch an act of indelicacy and indecorum, as no well educated

cated young perſon could have thought of, and that it was alone pardonable in one who had been ſo ſtrangely brought up.

"May I write to my dear mother?" ſaid Mary, with ſomething of bitterneſs in her tone.

"You muſt learn, child," returned Lady Caroline, "to ſpeak of people properly.—Call Eleanor by her name; and remember that I am your mother."

"Eleanor was my mother when you went to India, and left me," replied Mary; "ſhe was my mother for eighteen years, while you never inquired after me; and indeed you muſt forgive me, my new mamma, if Eleanor be my mother in my mind as long as I live. Pray, may I not write to her?"

"Yes," ſaid Lady Caroline, ſullenly;—"but I muſt ſee your letter, that there may be no words ill ſpelt, and that I may judge what kind of a ſtrange hand you write."

Mary

Mary felt herſelf inclined to a retort, and ſomewhat of that ſpirit riſing within her, which it had coſt Mr. Ellis and Eleanor ſo much pains to ſubdue—happily, alarmed by the unuſual emotion that ſhe felt, ſhe pauſed; a moment's reflection brought to her mind the precepts ſhe had received, and invoking the ſpirit of mildneſs, which ſhe believed to preſide at Llamamon, ſhe replied ſubmiſſively, "I will do every thing I *can*, Madam, that you may deſire."

Mary's letter overflowed with the emotions of her heart; and not even the certainty of it being ſeen and diſapproved by Lady Caroline, could reſtrain her expreſſions.—Thus ſhe wrote:

"Ah! my dear mother, what have I not
"ſuffered ſince I was torn away from you?
"And you told me I was going to be
"happy; was not that a cruel mockery? I
"have been happy only two hours ſince I
"left

" left you; and my happineſs is vaniſhed!
" and is not likely to return.

" And can you be happy without your
" poor Mary? I do not believe it;—but
" you muſt come to me;—you muſt come
" very ſoon.—What a day of joy will it be,
" when I ſee you! What ſaid my dear fa-
" ther, when he found I was gone? quite
" gone! For oh! I ſhall never ſee Llama-
" mon again.—I think of you both with-
" out ceaſing; and who now ſupports my
" dear Mr. Ellis from his parlour to the
" little ſeat in the rock?

" I ſee you all together, weeping becauſe
" I am gone;—but you do not weep as
" much as I do; nor have you cauſe;—you
" may comfort each other; while I———
" They will not let me write to William;—
" it is not my fault that I do not; but you
" muſt write for me, and tell him nothing
" ſhall ever make me forget him.—Write
" immediately, and deſire he will write to
" me the moment he receives your letter.—
" I live at Rookby Park, near Dunſtable,
" Bedfordſhire,

" Bedfordſhire, and my name is———;
" but you know that better than I do, and
" how all theſe ſtrange things come about.
" Be ſure you tell all to William, and how
" you became my mother, when nobody
" elſe would be ſo.—I muſt not write to
" him, becauſe they ſay it is not decorous
" for young women to write to young men;
" but I ſuppoſe it will be decorous for him
" to write to me, and I ſhall not have an
" eaſy moment until I hear from him.—
" Above all things, come and ſee me ſoon;
" much I have to tell you: But you know,
" as well as I do, that the gold cage does
" not make the happy bird.

" Say all kind of loving things to every
" perſon I love; and now I think I love
" every body at Llamamon: But ſay moſt
" to Mr. Ellis—to yourſelf—to my dear
" father, and be you quite ſure that I will
" always be

" your dutiful, and grateful,
" and fondly loving daughter,
" while I breathe,
" MARY."

Lady Caroline read the letter.

"What mean you by this expreſſion," ſaid ſhe, "that you have been happy only two hours?"

"Pray aſk me no queſtions," replied Mary; "once I thought I could have been happy abſent from Llamamon, now I fear I never ſhall."

"You will be an ungrateful little wretch, then," ſaid Lady Caroline.

"It is my misfortune," cried Mary, burſting into tears, "to be a girl."

"To be a girl!" exclaimed Lady Caroline; "what mean you by that? Ah! I underſtand you; you are a mean liſtener.—Good God! how many meanneſſes have you been ſuffered to indulge in; how ſhall I ever correct ſuch propenſities? What a miſerable mother I am!"

"I did not liſten," returned Mary;—"but I could not help hearing——what (added ſhe, with increaſing emotion) I wiſh I had never heard."

Lady

Lady Caroline was alarmed, and checked the diſpoſition ſhe felt to be angry.

"Whatever you think you have heard," ſaid ſhe, mildly, "be aſſured you have ſtrangely deceived yourſelf, if you doubt of the kindneſs of Sir James or myſelf.—But, my dear, a perſon of your education muſt have very different notions of things from the truth.—A little time will reform all this; and help you too, I hope, to get the better of a ſpirit which I ſee you have, and which no well-bred women muſt ſhew.

"Come, don't weep (added ſhe, kiſſing her) you have written rather a ſtrange letter. However, I don't diſapprove of your love for the good Eleanor, but I muſt not have a word ſaid of this young fellow; there is an indecorum in it that I cannot endure: I will write a letter for you, which you ſhall copy, and this ſhall be the way with all your letters, until you are improved in your ſtyle, and know how to write for yourſelf.

"See, now, how in a moment I can write ſuch a letter, as you ought to have written."

Lady Caroline took up the pen, and wrote the following:

Rookby Park, near Dunſtable.

"Too well I know the kind ſolicitude of "my dear Mrs. Morgan for my welfare, "not to give her an early aſſurance of my "having performed a very pleaſant journey, "with great eaſe and ſafety. Lady Caro- "line and Sir James are kindneſs itſelf.— "This is a charming place, and I am as "happy as you promiſed me I ſhould be.— "Pray make my beſt compliments to the "worthy Mr. Ellis; give my kind regards "to Mr. Morgan, and aſſure yourſelf, my "dear Mrs. Morgan,

"that I an ever,

"very gratefully your's,

"MARY SEABRIGHT.

"Lady Caroline and Sir James deſire to be remembered to you."

"See,"

"See," cried Lady Caroline, "here is every thing you meant to ſay in a much ſhorter compaſs, and ſaid with a politeneſs and propriety that becomes your birth.—To talk ſo much of the ſorrow of any body for your abſence is not modeſt.—You ſee how I inſinuate the ſame thing without expreſſing it, by talking of the kind ſolicitude of Mrs. Morgan for you.—Theſe little delicacies are the ſoul of epiſtolary writing.—There is ſomething ſtrangely awkward, in ſaying in the body of the letter where you reſide; by making it a part of the date, all that is ſaved. It is the way with all polite people: And then again, how ruſtic you are in your expreſſions of regard; ſay all kind of *loving* things; I proteſt you make me bluſh.—It is very proper to remember Mr. Ellis; I believe he is a gentleman; but to ſend your love to every body at Llamamon, it is like deſiring love to all inquiring friends; but you will not do ſo again, I dare ſay; and then, why not ſign your name? You have little

reaſon to be aſhamed of it, I can tell you.—Here, take my letter, and copy it."

"Oh! pray excuſe me," ſaid Mary;—"I would not write ſuch a letter to my dear mother for the world; ſhe would never think it came from me."

"What! not when ſhe ſees your hand-writing?"

"She will not ſee my heart," replied Mary.

"I poſitively cannot ſuffer ſuch a rhapſody as you have written to be ſent," ſaid Lady Caroline; "if you do not chuſe to copy this letter, I will write myſelf to Eleanor, juſt to tell her we have arrived ſafe and well at this place.—It will be unkind not to do ſo."

"As you pleaſe, Madam," ſaid Mary, and ſat down in ſilent deſpondency.

"Then you will *not* copy this letter?" ſaid Lady Caroline.

"Pray excuſe me," cried Mary.

"Then you give up your deſire of writing to Eleanor?"

Mary

Mary was ſilent.

"Speak, child, when you are ſpoken to," ſaid Lady Caroline; "you are really ignorant of the firſt rudiments of good breeding."

"I would give the world to write to my dear mother," ſaid Mary, redoubling her tears; "but ſuch a letter! Indeed I cannot."

"I ſee you will exhauſt my patience," cried Lady Caroline; "yet, if it were poſſible, I would ſubdue you by tenderneſs."

"Let me write another letter, Madam," ſaid Mary; "it ſhall not reſemble that which you object to; but it will be ſomething kinder than that you have dictated."

"Well, I am too indulgent," ſaid Lady Caroline; "let me ſee what you would write."

Mary wrote as follows:

"*My beſt Friend,*

"I am very well, which is all the ſatisfac-
"tion I can give you; I have parted from

" you and dear Llamamon too lately to be
" happy.—But you muſt come and ſee me
" very ſoon; I can never forget *any* of thoſe
" whom I have loved for eighteen years of
" my life; do not fail to aſſure them I can-
" not.—I find it is not proper to write long
" letters, and you muſt not therefore im-
" pute it to me, if I add no more, than
" that I will be ever your's,

" moſt gratefully,

" M. S."

Lady Caroline could not but admire the addreſs, which, however, was more the addreſs of nature than of art, with which Mary had contrived to expreſs all that lay upon her mind, without ſeeming to expreſs any thing. However, as it ſuited not her preſent plan to preſs the matter farther, ſhe ſuffered this letter to go; adding to it a few words of her own, to aſſure Eleanor that Mary was recovering her gaiety every hour, and that ſhe ſeemed to take a delight in every

every thing relative to her new ſituation.—She did not repeat Mary's invitation, or ſay a word that could poſſibly call for an anſwer.

Mary, however, thought of nothing but the letter ſhe was to receive.—She counted the days and the hours, and was thrown into deſpair, when ſhe found that they were about to remove to London before its arrival.

"Will my mother's letter be ſent after me?" aſked ſhe.

"No doubt of it," ſaid Lady Caroline.—"Pray make yourſelf eaſy."

Mary, however, could not make herſelf eaſy, and found every day leſs and leſs reaſon to be ſatisfied with the change in her fortune.

Lady Caroline had remained in Bedfordſhire only until ſhe could provide Mary with a decent change of clothes; and this was a

buſineſs ſhe was very impatient to diſpatch. It gave her the vapours, to look upon her in her little brown ſtuff jacket, and round eared cap; and the partiality with which Mary regarded theſe memorials of her paſt ſtate, ſerved only to make them more odious in the eyes of Lady Caroline. She found, with aſtoniſhment, that one of the principal engines which ſhe had propoſed making uſe of in corrupting the heart of Mary, had no effect upon her mind. She found her regardleſs of the foppery of dreſs; and now ſhe could no longer exhibit herſelf to William, neglectful even of what was evidently advantageous to her perſon, Lady Caroline immediately conceived the meaneſt opinion of her underſtanding, and could not help expreſſing her fear to Sir James that ſhe ſhould never be able to make any thing of her.

The neceſſary buſineſs of the new equipment of Mary being over, and a houſe hired, Lady Caroline removed to town. Here ſhe immediately ſummoned around her maſters

of

of all kinds, and the work of education began.

Lady Caroline, however, by no means meant to charge herſelf, unaſſiſted, with the trouble of ſuperintending the formation of Mary's perſon and manners. She ſoon provided herſelf with a governeſs, to whom ſhe delegated the right of never allowing the poor victim a moment's repoſe. Nor did the ſyſtem of pretended gentleneſs continue long. Lady Caroline perceived that all the affected kindneſs on her part produced nothing like affection on Mary's.—Her heart was indeed ſhut from all poſſibility of reſpondent tenderneſs, by a conſciouſneſs that ſhe was deſigned to be duped; and Lady Caroline, loſing all hopes of duping her, loſt with it all patience, and even all affectation of affection, and took the high tone of authority and coercion.

CHAP. XVI.

IN the mean time, Mary pined to hear from her beloved Llamamon. She thought her dear mother unkind, and could conceive no reaſon why ſhe neglected to write to her.—It ſeemed to her, that ſhe was alone in the world, without one perſon in whom to reſt her affections, or from whom ſhe could expect a return of love. In having all intercourſe cut off between her and the friends of her youth, exiſtence ſeemed to be ſuſpended; the intereſt of life was loſt; her faculties became torpid; and ſhe reſembled more an automaton than an intellectual being.

She

She had now been more than a month in London, when ſhe was at length bleſſed with the ſo much deſired letter; ſhe tore it half through, in her eagerneſs to open it, even though her governeſs informed her that no young lady was ever eager about *any* thing; aſſured, in her own mind, that ſhe was going to read the warmeſt effuſions of maternal love;—what then was her grief and ſurpriſe when ſhe read as follows:

"*My dear Young Lady,*

"It is not for me to attempt to expreſs "how much I am obliged to you for the "honour of your letter, nor how glad I am "to hear you are well. Perhaps you think "I ought to have told you ſo before; but "I have been prevented. I flatter myſelf "you are very happy, and that you do "every thing in your power to oblige and "pleaſe Lady Caroline and Sir James. I "ſhall always be glad to hear this, but I am "afraid I ſhall never ſee it, being now "growing old, and London being ſo far off.

Beſides,

"Beſides, my dear young lady, it does not "ſuit you now to care ſo much, whether I "ſee you or not: And perhaps it will be "beſt that you think as little of Llamamon "as you can. My huſband deſires his duty "to you, and I beg to preſent my humbleſt "reſpects to Lady Caroline and Sir James. "Mr. Ellis is but very indifferent; he begs "his beſt compliments to you.

"I am, my dear young lady,

"with all duty,

"your very humble ſervant,

"ELEANOR MORGAN."

Mary dropt the letter from her hand, and ſat, for a moment, pale and motionleſs.—Then claſping her hands together, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears.

Lady Caroline entered the room at that moment.—"What is the matter?" ſaid ſhe.

"Something

"Something in that letter, Madam, I believe," ſaid the governeſs.

"Oh! it is from Eleanor, I dare ſay," returned Lady Caroline.—"Well, now you will be happy, I hope."

"Happy!" ſaid Mary.—"Oh! Madam, if you would have let me written, as I would have written, I ſhould not have had ſuch an anſwer."

Lady Caroline took the letter, and having read it, "I ſee nothing in this letter but what is very proper," ſaid ſhe; "and it may convince you, child, that it is not only I, who think it time you ſhould forget Llamamon, your dear old mother herſelf is of that mind.—I always knew her for a woman of good ſenſe, or I ſhould not have truſted you to her care;—and——"

A riſing ſob from Mary interrupted what Lady Caroline was about to have ſaid farther.

"I poſitively will have none of this nonſenſe," cried ſhe.—"Come, reſume your leſſons, or—Madame de Merville, we muſt think of ſome kind of puniſhment for this perverſe girl; I obſerve that ſhe never minds what either you or I ſay."

"I dare ſay Mademoiſelle will be more attentive," returned Madame de Merville; "and ſhe is very quick when ſhe will attend."

"What was ſhe doing, when ſhe was interrupted by this letter?" ſaid Lady Caroline.

"She was repeating a French verb," ſaid Madame de Merville.

"Begin again, then," ſaid Lady Caroline, addreſſing herſelf to Mary; "and let me hear whether you are perfect in it."

Mary attempted to obey, but her voice was broken, and her recollection gone. Lady Caroline ſtormed, and at length diſmiſſed her to her own room, and forbade her to ſtir down ſtairs for the remainder of the day.

No

No command could have been more welcome; alone ſhe wept, and ruminated over the letter unmoleſted.

"Can it be true," ſaid ſhe, "that it no longer ſuits me to care about my dear mother? my *only* mother; for alas! I have no other.—Oh! that I had died before I left Llamamon! and then not a word of William! If it does not ſuit me to care about my mother, it will leſs ſuit me to care about him; but how can I help it? No, no, I will love him while I live. Mr. Ellis ſends me his *compliments!* What a cruel change in every thing! But I am not changed—no, nor ever will be."

Mary ſeemed to revive as ſhe made this reſolution; ſhe wiped the tears from her eyes.

"I will write to my mother," ſaid ſhe;—"I will not ſuffer a doubt to remain, as to what I think and feel; and when ſhe knows all

all this, perhaps ſhe may write more like her dear ſelf."

Mary was prompt in executing this deſign.—She wrote; and having given her letter to the woman who waited on her, ſhe entertained not a doubt but that it would be ſafely conveyed to the poſt.

Lady Caroline, however, had taken her meaſures too well for Mary's plan to ſucceed.——She had given orders, that any letter directed to Mary, or any attempted to be ſent out of the houſe by her, ſhould be delivered into her hands; ſo that Mary's epiſtle had not been finiſhed a quarter of an hour, before it was ſafely depoſited in Lady Caroline's writing box.

It can ſcarcely be doubted but that Eleanor would not loſe a moment in replying to Mary's firſt letter; a letter which too plainly ſpoke the reſtraint and grief that her beloved child was under. She *had* replied to it,

it, and in a manner ſo expreſſive of her feelings, however guarded in her expreſſions, that Lady Caroline had thought proper wholly to ſuppreſs the epiſtle. In conſequence of having ſo done, ſhe had herſelf written to Eleanor, explaining to her how neceſſary it was that Mary ſhould forget Llamamon, and exacting from Eleanor that ſhe ſhould write ſo to her, as to lead her to believe that even Eleanor herſelf expected this from her.

Lady Caroline talked of the duties of children, and the duties of ſtation, and informed Eleanor, that ſhe expected ſhe would write ſuch a letter as ſhe could, with propriety, ſuffer her daughter to read.

The epiſtle that had cauſed Mary ſo much grief, was the conſequence of this requiſition; but it was not until a conſultation, held with Mr. Ellis, that Eleanor had been able to bring her mind to comply with Lady Caroline's mandate. He had powerfully repreſented,

ſented, that it did not belong to her to increaſe the obſtacles that lay in the way of Mary's obedience to her parents; that it was for herſelf to decide the part ſhe would take; and that ſhe had age and underſtanding ſufficient for ſuch a deciſion; and that, to the dictates of her reaſon, and the feelings of her heart, they muſt leave her. Eleanor had acquieſced in the opinions of Mr. Ellis. But who can expreſs the anguiſh with which ſhe had written her letter.

From the moment that ſhe had ceaſed to follow, with her weeping eyes, the carriage that had conveyed her beloved Mary from her ſight, to that which brought her the letter from her darling, ſhe had known no quiet night or day. In the conduct which Sir James and Lady Caroline held, when they came to reclaim a daughter, whom, for eighteen years, they had abandoned and forgotten, the experienced mind of Eleanor had foreſeen all the trials and misfortunes to which a change of ſtation would ſubject her, whom

whom ſhe loved more than life. She was not, for an inſtant, deceived by their profeſſions of kindneſs, and ſhe foreſaw their purpoſe of breaking all the ties of affection which Mary had hitherto formed.

Such was Eleanor's opinion of Mary's heart, that ſhe believed the latter would be much eaſier broken than the former.—The deſolation and deſpair of William alſo racked her mind; yet could ſhe not ſuggeſt a hope, and hardly dared to entertain a wiſh, that Mary, by her conſtancy, ſhould bring him conſolation. Their union was an event that now ſeemed to be oppoſed by barriers inſurmountable, and even ſuch as Eleanor knew not, whether or no ought to be ſurmounted. Of the ungrateful and unkind treatment ſhe had herſelf met with, ſhe was fully ſenſible; but the ſenſe of this, which had, however, led her ſo ſtrenuouſly to refuſe every appearance of remuneration from Sir James, was loſt in her more acute ſenſations for the miſeries of others.

With

With ſlow and trembling ſteps, her bodily ſtrength overcome, by the emotions of her mind, ſhe had, on the departure of Mary, taken her way to the vicarage. Fearful of ſhocking Mr. Ellis, by too abrupt a communication of an event which ſhe knew would ſo much affect him, ſhe thought to have told her ſtory with preparation and precaution, but her countenance at once declared that ſhe had ſome diſaſter to relate, and Mr. Ellis found relief in knowing that Mary, to whom he naturally ſuppoſed that it related, was alive and well: Yet when he conſidered all the circumſtances of her abandonment by her parents, the views with which they now ſeemed to ſeek her, and when he reflected upon the attachments ſhe had formed, and the natural turn of her mind, he could ſee nothing in proſpect for her future life but a ſevere ſtruggle between ambitious avarice and diſintereſted affection; and which, whatever way it might terminate, would probably involve her in miſery.

Mr.

Mr. Ellis was himſelf ſo much overcome by theſe conſiderations, that he was unable to adminiſter any conſolation to Eleanor.—They continued together through the remainder of the day, mutually giving way to their grief and their lamentation; repeating the ſame things over and over again; conſuming themſelves with vain regrets, and tormenting themſelves with conjectural evils.

In this ſituation Richard had found them, on his return home.—He had heard ſome flying reports of the adventures of the day, and had quickened his ſteps, tormented with fear and ſuſpenſe.——His cottage he had found abandoned, and, on entering the parlour of Mr. Ellis, he ſaw, in a moment, a confirmation of all he feared.

"Lady Caroline and her Captain are come," ſaid he, "and have taken away our darling."

On the ſight of Richard, Eleanor burſt into freſh tears; and Mr. Ellis bowed his head upon his breaſt, and was unable to ſpeak. But when Eleanor had told the whole ſtory, and had repreſented Sir James and Lady Caroline as her penetration had taught her to ſee them, Richard's grief was changed into indignation; and the only circumſtance from which he ſeemed to find it poſſible to derive the ſmalleſt conſolation was, that Eleanor had ſo ſteadily refuſed any gratuity from Sir James.

This deſolated trio had met every day ſince the ſad one, to talk over their loſs, and to conjecture, every hour, where Mary was, and what ſhe was doing. Mr. Ellis had again fallen ſick with grief; and wanting his affectionate nurſe, found it more difficult to recover.

At length Mary's letter arrived; but the rapture with which the ſuperſcription was read, was changed into increaſed ſorrow, when

when the contents of the letter were known. Here her affectionate or anxious friends thought they read all they feared; too well they knew the texture of her heart, not to be aſſured, that if ſhe had dared to have expreſſed its feelings, ſhe would not have contented herſelf with a few obſcure lines; and from the reſtraint, which they plainly ſaw was laid upon her, they augured every misfortune and unhappineſs.

Eleanor, in replying to this letter, had endeavoured to think more of what would be proper to meet Lady Caroline's eye, than of expreſſing that of which her mind was full. But her feelings had been too powerful for her prudence, and the reſult was ſuch as has been ſeen. She underſtood the miſtake ſhe had fallen into, on receiving Lady Caroline's letter, yet could ſhe not prevail with herſelf to comply with her injunctions, as to the ſtyle of the epiſtle that was expected from her, until the recovery of Mr. Ellis had convinced her that an oppoſition to

Lady Caroline's deſires might add to, but could not alleviate the ſorrows of Mary.

"If you write, as you wiſh to write," ſaid Mr. Ellis, "be aſſured your letter will never reach her: It is poſſible, that, by taking the tone Lady Caroline requires of you, you may preſerve an intercourſe, which may eventually be of uſe to Mary, and comfort to yourſelf."

This argument had prevailed, yet had it been with a bleeding heart that ſhe had written thoſe lines, which had ſo much diſtreſſed the ſuſceptible and feeling Mary.

CHAP. XVII.

IN giving her ſecond letter to her ſervant, Mary had not affected any myſtery, or enjoined any concealment. It had not occurred to her unpractiſed mind that either was neceſſary. She knew, by experience, that Lady Caroline would controul her ſtyle in writing, but ſhe did not ſuſpect that ſhe meant to prevent all intercourſe between her and Eleanor. In avoiding to mention her intention of writing a ſecond time, ſhe ſought rather to eſcape all contention on a point where ſhe was reſolved, than to conceal what

ſhe thought not only allowable, but laudable and neceſſary.

If thus, with reſpect to herſelf, ſhe had no intention of diſguiſe, neither had ſhe any reaſon for diſtruſt of the perſon to whom ſhe committed her letter.

It was not poſſible that ſhe could diſcover, in the ſenſible ſycophant and obſequious attendant, the inſidious ſpy, the relator of every action, however unimportant, and the reporter of every unguarded word and look that eſcaped her. Hence ſhe had no doubt but that her letter would find its way to Llamamon, and that, in due time, ſhe ſhould receive an anſwer to it. For this anſwer, ſhe waited moſt impatiently, and when the days and weeks paſſed on without this expectation being anſwered, ſhe again wrote, and even followed this letter with a third, before it was poſſible ſhe could receive an anſwer to the ſecond. But in vain ſhe wrote, no anſwer came.—Suddenly ſhe was ſtruck

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with the recollection of what had happened to William's firſt letters to her on his leaving Llanbeder. She doubted not, but that either ſimilar arts were practiſed to diſappoint her intercourſe with her former friends, or that Lady Caroline had laid Eleanor under an injunction to give up all communication with her.

This conjecture drove her to deſpair.—unaccuſtomed to any arts, and unſkilled in the practice of deceit, no method occurred to her by which ſhe could elude the vigilance of Lady Caroline. She thought not of bribing her attendant, becauſe ſhe was alike incapable of tampering with the honeſty of any one, and becauſe, convinced of the rectitude of her affections, and the propriety of continuing her correſpondence with Eleanor, it did not occur to her that there could be a neceſſity for duplicity or concealment. She ſtrictly queſtioned her as to her delivery of the letters to the poſt, and received the moſt earneſt aſſurances that they had been

properly taken care of. Her mind then reſted upon the ſuſpicion that Lady Caroline had forbidden Eleanor to write, and perhaps this was the moſt wounding ſuppoſition of the two, as it involved, if not a failure of kindneſs in Eleanor, at leaſt a weak compliance with the unjuſtifiable deſires of Lady Caroline, which could not but be extremely diſtreſſing to the affectionate heart of Mary.

As Lady Caroline had failed in inſpiring Mary with love for her, from the early diſcovery ſhe had made of the ſpring, from which flowed her pretended maternal tenderneſs, ſo had ſhe as little ſucceeded by her late harſh treatment in her attempt to impreſs her mind with terror.

Mary was not an infant.—Her reaſon was uncommonly mature for her age.—There was nothing in Lady Caroline's conduct that challenged her reſpect, or that could lead her to prefer the principles that ſeemed to govern Lady Caroline's actions, to thoſe by which ſhe

ſhe was accuſtomed to regulate her own.—Obliged to ſtoop beneath the weight of her mother's authority, ſhe yet felt no dread of it, and, like the ſupple reed, bent under the fury of the ſtorm, but to be the more upright the moment it was paſſed. She heſitated not, therefore, to avow to Lady Caroline, that ſhe had written repeatedly to Eleanor, and that ſhe was ſurpriſed and grieved that ſhe had received no anſwer.

"I know not," ſaid Lady Caroline, "whether to wonder moſt at the temerity with which you have taken upon you to act for yourſelf, or the boldneſs with which you avow this temerity. Do you imagine I ſhall either pity you for your diſappointment, or aſſiſt you in clearing up the cauſe of it?"

"Perhaps, Madam," replied Mary, "you will at leaſt inform me whether you have contributed to it."

"I contributed! How ſhould I contribute? Do you think, child, I ſhould condeſcend to any mean arts to gain a point,

that I could ſecure by the exertion of my lawful authority?"

"You have not then forbidden my mother to correſpond with me?" ſaid Mary.

"No, I aſſure you I have not; but no doubt ſhe ſees herſelf too well the impropriety of ſuch a correſpondence to continue it;—and I ſhould certainly find means to make her repent her folly and impertinence, were ſhe to enter into a clandeſtine intercourſe with you."

"Clandeſtine!" ſaid Mary.—"Indeed Madam, I never meant it ſhould be ſuch."

"Why then did you not ſhew your letters?" ſaid Lady Caroline.

"Becauſe you would not ſuffer me to write what I thought," returned Mary.

"And how dare you write what I do not approve?" aſked Lady Caroline.

"Oh!" cried Mary, "how is it poſſible to *think* as we are ordered!"

"It is at leaſt poſſible to forbear expreſſing your thoughts," returned Lady Caroline;

line; "and this is the leaſt that you owe to the commands of a parent."

"I underſtood," ſaid Mary, "that I was allowed to love my dear mother, and to tell her ſo; but if I do not tell her ſo my own way, ſhe will not underſtand me; and then ſhe will write me ſuch another letter as tha I have received, and that will break my heart."

"You ſee ſhe does *not* write when ſhe *can* underſtand you," ſaid Lady Caroline, with a ſcornful ſmile; "and I engage ſhe will not write, were you to peſter her with a a thouſand letters; ſhe knows her duty better;—and do you ſuppoſe ſhe has nothing to do but to write to you?"

To this queſtion Mary continued indignantly ſilent; but ſoon loſt her anger, in turning her thoughts once again to the conſideration of what could be the poſſible cauſe of Eleanor's ſilence.

She had not yet learnt to doubt the poſitive aſſurances of Lady Caroline; ſhe therefore no longer ſuppoſed her acceſſary to this ſilence: Illneſs, ſhe thought, could not be the cauſe; for then ſome one would have written for her; and admitting and repeating a thouſand conjectures, ſhe began to ſettle in the opinion that Lady Caroline had ſuggeſted, that Eleanor was herſelf ſenſible of the impropriety of their correſpondence.

The words in the letter that ſhe had received, "that it did not ſuit her now, to care ſo much whether ſhe ſaw Eleanor or no," ſtrengthened this opinion, and at length Mary remained convinced that her dear mother voluntarily gave up all intercourſe with her, from a belief that it was right, and for her good that ſhe ſhould do ſo.

Of the tenderneſs of this more than parent, ſhe doubted not an inſtant; and if ſhe were a little angry with her judgment, ſhe was more ready to find an apology for her than

than ſhe would have been to have excuſed any fault of her own.

As ſhe knew Eleanor did nothing without the advice of Mr. Ellis, ſhe concluded that it would be equally in vain to write to him as to her; yet could ſhe not conſent to give up her connexions at Llamamon; and her deſire to know ſomething of William, and to teſtify her conſtancy and faith to him, became ſo urgent and diſtreſſing, that it gave her no reſt night or day.

In loſing all communication with Llamamon, ſhe alſo loſt all poſſibility of addreſſing herſelf to him. She knew not where he was, he having informed her, in his laſt letter, that he was going to take a journey of ſome hundred miles, and that he would let her know how to direct to him when he wrote next.—To whom then ſhould ſhe apply? The queſtion coſt her much debating; and at length ſhe reſolved to addreſs herſelf to Miſs Challoner.

She had no doubt but that her letter would meet with a favourable reception, having too much reaſon to know the reſpect that all that family paid to riches; and the conſideration, that even Humphry himſelf would now regard her inquiry as a favour, ſilenced all the ſcruples that a ſomewhat mingled pride and delicacy raiſed againſt her appearing to ſeek the attention and regard of William.—The letter was as follows:

"Wonderful things have happened to "me, my dear Jenny; ſo wonderful, that I "ſcarcely know myſelf.—But more wonder- "ful than all would it be, ſhould they have "made me forget my dear friends in Wales. "No, my dear Jenny, that can never hap- "pen, while I have memory for any thing. "But is it as certain that my dear friends "have not forgotten me? I write to my "dear mother, and ſhe does not anſwer my "letters.—I think of William unceaſingly, "and it does not appear that he thinks of "me. Have you, too, forgotten your old

"companion

" companion Mary? We uſed to be friends,
" and that we were not always ſo, was far
" from being according to my wiſh. Let
" us be friends for the future.—Indeed,
" my dear Jenny, you ſhall never have
" reaſon to complain of me.

" Two things, my dear, I beg you will do
" for me; go to my dear mother, and tell
" her ſhe makes me weep night and day,
" becauſe ſhe will not write to me. Say to
" her, that if ſhe has not quite forgotten to
" love me, ſhe will write me a few lines, only
" juſt *(no more)* to tell me that ſhe loves me,
" and that her dear ſelf, my dear father, and
" Mr. Ellis, are well.—This is all I aſk of
" her.—But, my dear Jenny, will not you
" do more for me? It is the ſecond thing I
" have to requeſt from you. Indeed, if you
" love me ever ſo little, if you knew how
" anxious and uneaſy I am, you would not
" deny me; and who will tell me what I
" wiſh to know, if you will not? Where is
" William? Is he well? Does he think ſtill
" of me? And does he believe that I ſtill

" think

" think of him? Ah! if he could ſee my
" heart, he would know how I hate all the fine
" things that ſeem to make a diſtinction be-
" tween him and me.—Their glitter might
" delight me, if I thought of ſharing them
" with him, but I deſpiſe them heartily, if
" they are to be the price of my reſigning
" him.—How ſincerely do I wiſh myſelf
" again in my dear little cottage at Llama-
" mon. Indeed I was a thouſand times
" happier there than in this gaudy houſe,
" covered with gold, and ſhining with
" glaſſes.—Did I but know where he is, I
" would write, and tell him ſo; and will he
" not write to me? But if he cannot, do
" not you fail to do ſo, my dear Jenny, and
" write ſpeedily, for no peace ſhall I have
" until I hear from you. Oh! if you knew
" how many ſleepleſs nights I have paſſed,
" when I could not cloſe my eyes for think-
" ing of William, you would haſten to tell
" me he is well, and has not forgotten his
" poor Mary. You muſt direct to me by
" my new name, in Portland Place, London;

" but

"but believe me, my dear Jenny, I ſhall "never be any other to you than your "affectionate friend,

"MARY."

When Mary had finiſhed her letter, it occurred to her, that although her intercourſe with Eleanor had not been prohibited, ſhe had been expreſsly forbidden to write to, or even to inquire after William; and that now it was known that ſhe had ſent letters out of the houſe without conſulting Lady Caroline on the contents, it was very probable that her ſervant might have received orders not to charge herſelf with any more. The leaſt chance of failing in her preſent plan, was what ſhe could not reſolve to hazard, and ſhe determined, in this caſe, to depend only on herſelf.

She had obſerved, ſeveral times, as ſhe paſſed to and from the dining-room, letters lying

lying upon a table in the hall, ready to be delivered to the poſt. She thought if ſhe could mingle her's with the other's, all would be ſent away together, without any alteration or attempt at the detention of her's.—She executed this little ſcheme with eaſy ſucceſs, and had the pleaſure of ſeeing her letter, a few moments after ſhe had depoſited it, given into the hands of the poſt-man.—Secure in this material point, her thoughts reſted only on the anſwer ſhe was to receive.

The quickneſs of the poſt was ſo diſproportionate to the almoſt immeaſurable diſtance, as Mary thought it, which lay between her and Llamamon, that this anſwer arrived even before her impatience expected it.—It arrived indeed; but ſhe received it from hands that ſhe little ſuppoſed it would have fallen into.

One day, as ſhe was, as uſual, liſtening to the documents of her governeſs, Lady Caroline entered the room, with an open letter in her

her hand, her eyes flaming with paſſion, and her whole countenance diſfigured with rage. She came up cloſe to Mary, and, with an action that made her expect ſhe would ſtrike her, "Oh! thou little wretch," cried ſhe; "thou art no daughter of mine; low-ſouled, plebeian creature! There, take that (cried ſhe, throwing her the letter) could I imagine a more ſevere puniſhment than the reading that letter will be, I would inflict it. But even thy creeping ſpirit muſt revolt againſt ſuch inſults as that letter contains—rejected as thou art; yes, rejected? well haſt thou deſerved it, by the vulgar wretches thou haſt been mean enough to court. Oh! (continued ſhe, throwing herſelf, exhauſted by her rage, into a chair) that my daughter, that the grand-daughter of the Earl of L——— ſhould demean herſelf!"

"Mary trembled every limb.—Terrified by ſuch a diſplay of paſſion, as ſhe had never before ſeen diſfigure the human form, ſhe ſat motionleſs and pale, unable to look at

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the letter, and incapable of underſtanding the cauſe, or of deprecating the effects of ſuch violent wrath.

A flood of tears, for a moment, ſtopped Lady Caroline's powers of ſpeech; but recovering her voice, "tell me, creature (ſaid ſhe) how you dared to hold intercourſe with any of that deteſted family? How you preſumed again to write, unknown to me, to any one? How in vain do I ſtrive to guide you by tenderneſs and affection? The thing is impoſſible; you muſt be ruled with a rod of iron, and ſo you ſhall be ruled.—But as to this clown, that with ſuch indelicacy, not to ſay impudence, you ſeek after, take my word for it, I would rather ſee you dead, than that you ſhould continue your odious intercourſe with him. The views that I and Sir James have for you, muſt and ſhall be fulfilled; and remember that I explicitly tell you, that if you do not, from this moment, baniſh this wretch from your heart, a fate awaits you that ſhall make you ſuffer to

the

the laſt moment of your life.—Convey her (continued Lady Caroline, turning to Madame de Merville) convey her to her chamber, and there let her remain for a week to come.—I cannot bear to ſee her face; and let us ſee whether faſting and confinement can bring her to a proper ſenſe of what belongs to her birth and fortune.—Take that letter with you, and may every word ſting you to the heart, as it has done me."

"Good God!" ſaid Mary, as ſhe aroſe with trembling limbs to accompany Madam de Merville; "and is all this becauſe I love him who is the worthieſt of his kind, and who was willing to ſacrifice eaſe and fortune for my ſake?"

Lady Caroline's violence had ſo overcome the ſpirits of Mary, that ſhe was ſometime before ſhe could ſufficiently compoſe herſelf to read a letter that the former had announced in terms ſo degrading and alarming. At length ſhe gained courage; nor could ſhe, in ſpite of the preſent ſtate of her mind,

mind, ſuppreſs a ſmile, when ſhe read a compoſition ſo curious and abſurd.

MISS CHALLONER, TO MISS SEABRIGHT.

" *My dear Miſs*,

" For I know manners better than to call " you Mary now, though, to be ſure, you " are ſo condeſcending, as I ſuppoſe you " think it, to call me dear Jenny. But all's " one for that. To be ſure you are Mary " now, as well as then. But I would not " have you think I have been at the board- " ing-ſchool for nothing; though ſeeing as " how you were never at no ſuch place; to " be ſure it can't be expected you ſhould " know what things are learnt there.

" But this is not the matter.—I am to " write to thank you for the favour of your " letter, as the ſaying is, and all that, tho' " no ſuch mighty favour, the motive taken " into the bargain.

" And

" And as to your inquiries, Miſs, if I may
" be ſo bold to ſpeak my mind, you might
" as well have let them alone, I think;—
" ſeeing, what can it anſwer to be hankering
" after my brother, now you are a lady born,
" and to be ſure meat for his maſter, tho'
" the ſame fleſh and blood as you always
" was: and ſo to be ſure my papa has told
" him over and over again; and ſo he's
" come to be of papa's mind; for William's
" no fool, though to be ſure a little too
" much given to book learning, and a
" little, in time paſt, too fond of you: But
" that's over, and ſo he has given his con-
" ſent to marry Miſs Fluellin, and we are all
" very agreeable, and ſo I ſuppoſe we ſhall
" have a wedding ſhortly, and ſo it won't be
" pretty, Miſs, in you to write to William.
" But to be ſure this can't grieve you; for I
" warrant, Miſs, you may have a Duke or
" an Earl any day. And there's the great
" 'ſquire ready to hang himſelf that he did
" not make love to you after another gueſs
" faſhion; but it would have been all one
" for

" for that I reckon; for Lord, Miſs, old Elea-
" nor ſays, as how you have a houſe covered
" with gold and glaſs, and precious ſtones,
" juſt as we read in the old ſtory books;--
" and you ſay ſo too, but ſeem not to care
" for ſuch things, nor more do I.—And then
" for ſervants! Bleſs me! there's no count-
" ing them, ſhe ſays; and then your
" mamma, Lady Caroline, and your papa, Sir
" James—and—Lord, what ſtrange things
" do come about! Why Eleanor ſays that
" he has hundreds of thouſands a year.—
" But, as I tell mamma, I don't matter ſuch
" things, not I.—Content's all; and I would
" have you think, Miſs, that I can be as
" content at Llanbeder Farm as you in your
" great houſe in London city.—No, Miſs,
" I don't envy you, as I tell mamma; for
" envy's a ſin; but I think it a pity you
" have not had more learning, as you
" was a lady born; for to be ſure you can't
" know nothing how to do things genteel;
" and papa ſays, if he could have but known
" how the land lay, he'd have given you a

" year's

" year's ſchooling, as ſoon as looked at you;
" for to be ſure he would have been well
" paid again, and then you might have
" known how to have played upon the harp-
" ſichords, and ſuch things, and how to
" have behaved as I do; and might have
" learned to flouriſh, and work tambour,
" all which, as papa ſays, would have been
" in your way now.—But I tells papa its no
" ſuch great matter; for riches covers all;
" and ſo I ſuppoſe, Miſs, the Lords and
" Dukes won't ſay nothing about your no
" learning. To be ſure they muſt be much
" more polite than that comes to; and ſo,
" Miſs, I hope you won't think any more
" about my brother.—I ſpeak for your good;
" for papa ſays, he did not like of you when
" you was poor, and he does not like of you,
" now you are rich; he's for no diſqualities,
" not he. Let every body keep in their
" ſtations, and then all will be well: And
" though, to be ſure, he comes of as an-
" cient a family as you do, and he's very
" well to do in the world; and of his fa-
" ther's

" ther's, and of his own getting beſides, and " has good expectations, yet he's not ſuch " an oaf, to think ſuch as you is now, is for " William, and Miſs Flueilin fits him to a " t———; and William's of the ſame " mind too, now, and I dare ſay we ſhall all " be very happy; as happy as you Miſs; " and ſo no more, but reſpects from all old " friends, and I am, Miſs,

" Your humble ſervant,

" JANE CHALLONER.

" I went, as you deſired, to your old mo- " ther, Eleanor, and ſhe's but poorly; but " has had but one letter from you, and that " ſhe anſwered; ſhe ſends her duty to you. " Mamma deſires her compliments; ſhe ſays " ſhe always thought you was ſomething; " but for my own part, I ſaw nothing ſo " particular in you; and ſo no more I ſay."

In this wonderful epiſtle, Mary ſaw the old envy and malice of Jenny, under the affected

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fected diſguiſe of content, and aſſumed conſequence; nor did ſhe, for a moment, credit the information that William had at length conſented to marry Miſs Fluellin. She felt this to be impoſſible; and all that grieved her was, that ſhe now ſaw it was in vain to hope for any account of him from his own family, and that ſhe knew not by what other channel to communicate with him.

She had, however, gained two pieces of intelligence by her letter to Jenny, which were ſatisfactory.—One, that William was returned to England, and that he was conſequently apprized of the change in her ſituation.—She hoped, therefore, from his love, that he would find ſome means of renewing their intercourſe; and the other, that as Eleanor had not received her letters, her ſilence could not be charged to any opinion of her's, as to the impropriety of their maintaining their correſpondence; much leſs to any abatement of affection on Eleanor's part. Mary could indeed no longer heſi-

tate to aſcribe the failure of her letters to the arts of Lady Caroline.—She loſt, therefore, from this inſtant, all dependance even upon her word; and as it was now plain that all letters directed to her were liable to fall into Lady Caroline's hands, and as it was almoſt certain that ſhe would be from henceforth prohibited from writing to *any* body, ſhe found herſelf at her wit's end, to contrive means how to maintain her intercourſe with any one at Llamamon. This was indeed the only permanent uneaſineſs that remained upon her mind. The effects at firſt produced by Lady Caroline's unbecoming rage, ſoon wore off; and as to the conſequent reſtraint that was put upon her, it concerned her little. She had too little reverence for Lady Caroline, to be affected by her diſpleaſure, and too little pleaſure in the people with whom ſhe uſually aſſociated, and too little predilection for the manners to which ſhe was expected to aſſimilate her own, to feel any regret at being deprived of the one, or ſhut up from the obſervation of the other.

END OF VOL. I.

MINERVA PUBLICATIONS.

COUNT ST. BLANCARD.

IN THREE VOLS. 12mo.

Price 9s. ſewed.

This Novel, we are informed, in the concluding page, is a tranſlation from the French. The ſtory turns upon the prejudices of high birth; prejudices which in France no longer exiſt. Theſe abſurd diſtinctions have given riſe to many a pathetic incident; for "the voice of nature is too loud to be ſilenced by artificial precepts."—It were to be wiſhed, that the wildneſs of Democracy had not afforded to the pen of the Hiſtorian, as well as to that of the Noveliſt, events equally true and affecting.

So imperfect is the nature of man, that the beſt principles are liable to degenerate into fanaticiſm; and it would be vain to expect, from the event-judging multitude, ſufficient diſcernment, diſcrimination, or candour, to ſeparate the caſual mixture of improper diſpoſitions and ſiniſter motives from the genuine motives of reaſon and juſtice. The Memoirs of Count St. Blancard, as being a tranſlation from the French, are entitled to ſome excuſe for an error common to Noveliſts:—that

beauty,

beauty, grace, virtue, and talents, can belong only to perſonages of high rank, by right of hereditary tenure; and that, however inferior may be the ſituation of the Hero or Heroine in the commencement of the Work, they muſt at length infallibly be diſcovered to have been of noble lineage. Theſe prejudices, it is to be feared, will wear out only with the feudal inſtitutions that gave them birth. The Count St. Blancard is, in other reſpects, an entertaining and well-connected Story, and may agreeably beguile a leiſure hour.

This Work avowedly is a tranſlation from the French.—It is probably the labour of ſome induſtrious Emigré, as the French idiom predominates; and ſome errors of the Preſs are diſcoverable.—The Story is well choſen; and it is diveſted of the immorality, party, and levity which are too frequently found in the lighter productions of the French Writers. To thoſe who ſeek amuſement in tracing the former manners of France, we may recommend this little Work: it may divert a ſolitary hour, without endangering youth, or diſguſting age.

CRITICAL REVIEW.